

ISLAM VERSUS SOCIALISM

by

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I

INTRODUCTION

Make for thyself a definition or description of the thing which is presented to thee, so as to see distinctly what kind of a thing it is, in its substance, in its nudity, in its complete entirety, and tell thyself its proper name, and the names of the things of which it has been compounded and into which it will be resolved. For nothing is so productive of elevation of mind as to be able to examine methodically and truly every object which is presented to thee in life, and always to look at things so as to see at the same time what kind of Universe this is and what kind of use every thing performs in it, and what value every thing has with reference to the whole, and what with reference to man, who is a citizen of the highest city, of which all other cities are like families, what each thing is, and of what is composed, and how long it is the nature of this thing to ensure.

—*Marcus Aurelius Antoninus.*

Ye build ! Ye build ! but ye enter not in,
Like the tribes whom the desert devoured in
their sin,
From the land of promise ye fade and die,
Ere its verdure gleams forth on your wearied
eye.

—*Mrs. Sigourney*

"Belly eats the man," said Victor Hugo. This penetrating observation contains a salutary warning against cold-blooded indifference to man's basic physical need. One cannot pass a sponge over a spiritual fact that "life is more than meat and body is more than raiment." But this cannot precede or supersede the inexorable and irresistible demand of the belly. It is only after man is able to keep body and soul together in a reasonably comfortable manner, that he can attend to the spiritual formula stated above and can build his moral personality. Hungry stomach is not only an insurmountable obstacle in the way of spiritual evolution and elevation, it is also a menace to social peace. Hungry bellies instinctively get together and turn things topsy-turvy. This is why it is now a prevailing belief that Sociological Upheavels are Geological Upheavels. The groundswell arising from privation and deprivation sweeps everything. Thus it is a flagrant folly to scoff at the problem of poverty and dismiss it as of no account. But it so happens that the Possessing Classes lean all too heavily on their vast wealth and often spurn the legitimate demand for a fair day's wage for a fair day's work. They never pause to think that even according to the dictates of religion, it is a sin to oppress the proletariat and the "wages of sin is death". How the "Have-gots" laugh to scorn the requests and protests of the "Have-nots" may be highlighted by quoting Sir Winston Churchill's light-hearted verbal imagery. On the occasion of his election speech he was asked to explain how Capitalism is superior to Socialism. Without a moment's pause, he observed. "Capitalism

is the unequal distribution of social blessings while Socialism is the equal distribution of social curses." He also characterised Russia as a riddle wrapped in mystery inside engima, as a precaution against further baffling questions.

Such graphic but cheap expressions cannot stem the storm which is brewing in empty stomachs. A society which turns a blind eye to the problem of poverty and turns a deaf ear to the demand for social justice, sits on the thin crust of a labouring volcano. The affluent classes may exercise their influence and defer an incipient crisis. But this very deference precipitates their doom, because "the hope deferred maketh the heart sick," and the union of sick hearts make the whole society sick. This is what has been in process in Pakistan since its inception.

Unfortunately for the people of Pakistan, Quaid-i-Azam died soon after his epoch-making triumph over the serried array of enemies within and without. Those who succeeded him belonged to the Possessing Class. They were the glittering relics of feudalism which has been aptly described by H.G. Wells as "confusion roughly organised." With the best will in the world they were congenitally unfit to size up the problem. They dilly-dallied with the pressing and distressing economic problem. They were so self-obsessed that they did not care to capitalize the surge of patriotism and the strong sense of emotional integration, and frame an acceptable constitution. Time and tide wait for no body. These purse-proud politicians were at last overtaken by Nemesis and Avenging Furies in 1958. Then people here and

abroad knew what a Troubled Heritage the Never-do-Wells had left. What happened and what did not happen under the Personality Cult is a recent history. The naked personal tyranny masquerading in the trappings of a make-believe democracy—deceptively called Basic Democracy,—has bequeathed a Heritage of Hate. The supremacy of authority and the suppression of freedom for ten years, five months and seventeen days, could solve the urgent problem of bread, because in an atmosphere of unbridled freedom of the Press and the Platform, the Powers-that-be have to look over shoulders and cannot make a bee-line for the goal of economic salvation. But the solution of the Bread Problem is possible only when the Dictator has a democratic heart and is not exploiting his “despotism tempered with epigrams” to feather his own nest and the nests of his active accomplices. One’s hair stand on end when one passes in review the ravages of the human werewolves let loose upon the Pakistan society. The masses were bled white because the exploiters drove their lancet to the parts where the blood was most congested. Under the auspices of their Patron-in-Chief the mill-owners became millionaires. Some theological politicians who had bartered away their conscience for a mess of pottage also made a common cause with the diabolic regime and became its conscience keepers. Thus the exploiters not only made a holocaust of economic welfare, but made a hay of genuine reverence for Islam. Such theological politicians as had debased their learning became the satellite force of the ruthless reckless and remorseless dictator. They vainly tried to make “Islam” a

handmaid of his tyrannical policies. The pinch-beck Caesar vindicated the truth of Lord Acton’s dictum: “Power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely.” Neither he nor his sycophants gave a moment’s thought to the progressive deterioration of the economic conditions of the people. It was during the decade of decay, decline and decadence that twenty-three families monopolized the wealth of the country and inflicted a grinding poverty on their victims. The people were all the time being fed on the flabby notion that the economic crisis was the birth-pang of a millennium. Even if it was so why the ruler and his satellites did not share the sufferings. The pious Muslim rulers in the past did not let the subjects stew in their own juice. It is a broad fact of history that the Pious Caliphates always minimised their rations and reduced them to the level of a humble citizen. This was a radiant proof of their genuine solicitude, and they always made their subjects feel that they would sink and swim with them. Even the communists and their cater-cousins—socialists cannot present any such instance of benevolence from the lives of their leaders and rulers. As a matter of fact they have no such traditions because traditions are a byproduct of good living and the socialist rulers have never had a spell of benevolently good living. But the history of Islam abounds in instances of the Muslim Caliphs and Rulers living on bare diet during famine. But the usurpers and the upstarts ruled Pakistan with an iron hand and did not suffer a flea-bite when the teeming millions could hardly make both ends. With a view to drowning the cries of anguish, the Press and the

Platform were gagged and muzzled. For eleven years the whole nation was tied to the Procrustean bed on which men lose their human shape. In such a regime, freedom is a pretence, democracy an imposture, the tycoons dictate opinions, the craft rulers do the brainwashing. To record a vote is no consolation for an empty stomach. This we witnessed and experienced in the 1965 Presidential Election which ushered in an era of oppression, suppression and repression. This was the vernal seed bed of the undreamt-of upheaval. The Midas-minded Ruler and his henchmen saw their regime crashing about their ears. It happened because they had foolishly forgotten the fact that a time comes when even the worm turns. Thus the economic crisis which is ravaging the country is the legacy of the defunct regime.

The grinding poverty is writ large on the horizon. The political parties and the religio-political groups have sprung up like a mushroom at night. They are making the welkin ring with their tall claims to put things on an even keel. Out of evil cometh good. For the first time the economic issues have crystallized with a flaming clarity. Even a layman knows that 'tobe or not tobe' is the question. The times are out of joint. Elections are in the offing. Every party in the political arena is swearing by Islam and is parading its manifesto for the Brave New World which it will create when it comes into power. The issue is Poverty versus Property. In the coming struggle for power two warring camps have emerged. The impact of the sharp economic disparities and the violent social contrasts is so great and so deep that

even the conservatives have thrown to the winds their antiquated notions. They have now tacked their sails according to the breeze.

In spite of the fact that all parties promise to lead to economic El Dorado through Islam, they have split up into two warring camps and have begun to brand each other infidels. On one side are the Rightist leaders, who curse Socialism by bell, book and candle, because it is a lineal descendent of Marxism which is a godless ideology. We know that Marxists who do not camouflage their creed, are against religion because they think that religion brings strength to the elbow of the Possessing Class and proclaims poverty as a verdict of destiny. Naturally the opponents of Marxism have a common platform. But in their crusade against godless Communism they have begun to rectify their approach to the economic problem. They have begun to condemn Capitalism as un-Islamic. Though it is late in the day to decry Capitalism, yet it is a welcome sign. But they still ring changes on the sanctity of private ownership, which must be put into test-tube to separate goats from sheep. Private ownership referring to the articles of personal consumption is an inviolable sanctity which every sane man will defend. It is not being subverted anywhere. But the vast wealth invested in money-minting enterprises cannot be regarded as private ownership. It is Capitalism which erodes away the genuine private ownerships of the teeming millions. The Islamic groups and parties denounce Capitalism, but not as violently as they denounce Socialism which they condemn as a nigger

in the woodpile.

The other groups are the Leftists. The crypto-communists have lost all ground. They have joined the ranks of the Leftists. Now these Leftists call themselves either Socialists or Islamic Socialists. Just as the Islamic groups or *Islam-Pasand* Jamaats (as they sacrilegiously call themselves) have changed their tune and have fired broadsides against the Capitalists and have also fixed ceilings on property in sharp contradiction of their past pet and patent notions. Socialists have also begun to proclaim their allegiance to Islam and are emphasising that their Manifestoes are a replica of the principles of Islamic Social Justice. They say that their Socialism means nothing more and nothing less than economic devices to expedite the equitable redistribution of wealth. They now feel that wealth is like manure useless unless it is spread. But this change in their attitude is a pronounced deviation from their previous programmes which regarded religion as a purely personal affair. Obviously, Islam is not such a religion. It is a complete code of life. Quaid-e-Azam in his historic talk with Beverley Nichols said: "You must remember that Islam is not merely a religious doctrine but a realistic practical Code of Conduct. I am thinking in terms of life, and everything important in life. I am thinking in terms of our history, our heroes, our art, our architecture, our music, our laws, our jurisprudence." (page 190 of "Verdict on India")

In the clash of approaches, the Leftists and the Rightists have modified their old notions. They feel, and do so forcefully that they cannot evade or avoid

the problem of poverty nor can they let the Capitalists feel snug like a bug in the rug. If we scan their manifestoes, they are all alike or at least have a family likeness. But in their sabre-rattling and swash-buckling speeches they appear to be poles apart. The Rightist groups breathe fire and brimstone against Socialism and they brand it as infidelity. They deride the Socialists and the "Islamic Socialists" and say that they are like a blind man searching in a dark room for a black cat that is not there. The Socialists or the "Islamic Socialists" retort by saying that the theologians would succeed in tracking down the elusive cat.

The man in the street, awakened and alerted by his economic stress and distress, feels that both the Rightists and the Leftists cherish certain mental reservations. The former have now begun to criticise Capitalism. But the inhibited way in which they spell out their criticism betrays that they have a soft corner for the Possessing Class because they plead mild measures for dealing with them. They weaken their Islamic stand by saying that nationalization is repugnant to the spirit of Islam. They call it an act of coercive expropriation. But there is another side to the medal. The fact that when ten-percent people possess ninety-percent wealth of a country and the ninety-percent people possess only ten-percent of wealth, cannot be in harmony with the spirit of Islam. Under the existing Capitalistic regime the society, as G.B. Shaw once said, is like a dining table. At one end are dinners without diners and at the other end are diners without dinners. What confers value on property? Obviously, it is the people. The rent of a

building is determined by the number of people who pass by its window. It is therefore not Socialism only which condemns the exploitation of the many by the few. Islam as practised by the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and by his Companions cannot connive at economic pauperization, intellectual impoverishment and political enslavement. The fundamental formula of Islam is that all property belongs to Allah, and this in mundane terms means that it belongs to the Islamic State which is God's vicegerent on earth. This has been emphasised by the Holy Quran which says: "Is it not (the case) that to God belongeth whatever is in the heavens and on earth." (x: 56). It again says: "Yea give then something yourselves out of the means which God has given to you." (xxiv: 33). God created all for all and not for a microscopic section. God says: "It is He Who hath created for you all things that are on earth." (xi: 29). In regard to the legal nature of the right of society what God has created, the Holy Quran enunciates the formula thus: "Believe in God and His Apostle, and spend out of the substance whereof He has made you heirs." (lvii: 7). Al-Zamakhshari elaborated this concept thus: "The property you have in your hands is God's by virtue of His making and creating it. He supplied you with it and permitted you to reap its benefits, and made you His heirs and successors in dealing with it but it is not really yours and you are only God's agents and representatives." The hub and pivot of the system of owning in Islam is the concept of Trust. The rich are the Trustees and they can vindicate their trustworthi-

ness by so dealing with their wealth that it becomes Wealth Radiative and not Wealth Reflective. How can Islam tolerate the rich with groaning tables and the poor groaning under their tables. It can never approve property which breeds poverty, because it involves violation of the sacred formula that the Muslims are like brethren to one another and that they constitute a harmoniously integrated *Millat*. Thus when the accumulation of wealth in a small section tilts the balance against the whole society, the Islamic State as the representative of God on earth, can rectify it by diverting wealth from where it stagnates to where it fructifies into social well-being. When this self-evident aspect is obscured by the unwarranted advocacy for the rich, it lends strength to the Socialists who count more on the insane failings of their opponents than on the "sanity" of their views. Islam as an Ideal Rational Revealed Religion recognises the sanctity of the right of ownership. It does not leave its protection to the whims and fancies of the State. There is an authentic Hadith to this effect. It says: He who is killed in defence of his property is a martyr." (Bukhari and Muslim). The Holy Quran says: "If a hand steals the property that hand is cut." (v: 38). The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in his historic Farewell Address said: "O ye people! Your blood and money are sacred to you." Here money which means a Muslim's possession, is equated in sanctity with his life (blood). The Islamic concept of ownership crystallizes into two clear-cut aspects—the legal aspect and the beneficial aspect. The former is refer-

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able to the basic principle that all that is on the earth belongs to God. The latter aspect relates to the owner's obligation to society. Both these aspects emphasise the equation of personal well-being with Social Welfare, to bring about complete emotional integration in society and thus rule out the apprehension of class-conflict between the poor and the rich, and consequently of Socialism. It would thus be seen that the Quranic Concept of ownership is an effective anti-dote against Socialism and Communism which pass death-sentence on private ownership as they fail to make it compatible with Social Welfare.

It is the crowning glory of Islam that it eliminates all chances of clash between the rich and the poor. It confers respectability on the pious poor people and saddles the rich with the responsibility of holding their possessions as trust for the amelioration of the poor. As a matter of fact, religion has always harmonized the interests of the affluent section and the indigent section. When religion is denuded of its pristine purity and is sinfully reduced to a state of being "Opium of the Masses", Socialism steps into the breach. It cannot insinuate itself in a true religion-based society. Even the ancient prophet—Jesus Christ slammed the door against socialist incursion by presenting a picture of a God-believing society. The Gospel says:

"And the multitude of believers had but one heart and one soul; neither did any one say that aught of the things that he possessed, was his own; but all things were common unto them. . . And great grace was in them all. For neither was there

any one needy among them. For as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them, and brought the price of things they sold; and laid it down before the feet of the Apostles; and distribution was made to every one according as he had need." (The New Testament, Chapter IV Verses 32 to 35).

The Holy Quran has left no room for stupid reverence for an ill-gotten wealth. It has laid special emphasis on the equality of human right to reasonable living. The Holy Book says: "He (God) placed therein firm hills rising above it and blessed it and measured therein its sustenance in four days equally for all in need." (xli: 10). It also commands that Muslims are like brothers one to another. If ownership is exaggerated into Capitalism or if rapacious Capitalism is euphemistically called Private Ownership, the notion of fraternity goes by the board. How can exploiters be the brothers of the victims of their exploitation. We now turn to Ahadith which are practical commentaries on the Quranic injunctions. Rafa' b. Khadij reports: "I was ploughing my land one day when Allah's Messenger came that way. He asked me: 'whose land are you ploughing.' I said: 'The land belongs to another man and I am ploughing it on condition that I give one half of the produce to the landlord and keep the other half to myself.' Allah's Messenger said: 'You both are guilty of *riba* (usury). Return the land to that man and take your expenses back from him.'" (Bukhari and Nasai).

Imran b. Sohail Rafa' said to his father. "I have rented out my land for two hundred dirhams." His father said: 'O my son! Do not do so. Allah's Mes-

senger has forbidden the renting out of land for anything whatsoever. (From Hazrat Abu Musa in Bukhari and Muslim) In the Ashari tribe there was a custom that whenever bad times befell, each one of them would bring whatever he could, put it all together in one dish and then divide it equally among all. Allah's Messenger said: "I am indeed of them and they are of me."

It is self-defeating to make fetish of Private Ownership and vest it with an unwarranted sanctity. It is this attitude which has emboldened the Socialists to come out into the open and assert in combative tones the superiority of their *Ism*, which is lop-sided as it makes a clean sweep of private ownership. On the contrary, Islam recognises private ownership if it is not detrimental to Social Welfare. The Powers-that-be (*Ulil-Amr*) can take away the surplus wealth to meet national emergency. Even the Capitalist States which swear by private ownership, nationalise ownership of the means of communications. They fix the area for the sowing of certain crops. The landowners are ordered to hand over their produce to the Government at a control price. In extreme emergencies, even residences are requisitioned and the owners have to part with their residences on a rent fixed by the Government. In the state of war, many fundamental rights are taken away in the larger interests of the nation. In all free-economy countries, exploitation of minerals, irrigation projects, the provision of electricity or gas and the postal arrangements are State collectivised enterprises. There is no reason to presume that the Islamic State would be debarred

from collectivisation if the interests of Millat demanded it. But it will never allow what is being done in England. When the Labour Party comes into the saddle it nationalizes the Steel Industry. When the Labour Government is ousted and the Conservatives grasp the sceptre of authority they denationalize it. This is a blatant class-war which Islam can never countenance. In view of the widespread social chaos, the Islamic State will assume plenary powers to plan out dents from the social fabric. The owner of property is armed with extensive powers to enjoy it. But the primary limitation on it is that it must have been acquired by legitimate means. This limitation, if it is effective, is a bar against enormous concentration of wealth at the cost of others. The second limitation is the subordination of private possession to the superior needs of the nation. If the owner suffers from the infirmity of mind, he can be barred from handling his property in a happy-go-lucky manner. In this connexion the Holy Quran says: "To those weak of understanding make not over your property which God hath made a means of support for you, but feed and clothe therewith." (iv : 5)

In the light of the foregoing discussion, it is clear as daylight that Islam supersedes Capitalism and Socialism in harmonizing private ownership with the social welfare without abolishing it. If this view is propagated it will take the wind out of the sails of the socialists who just make convenience of the half-hearted portrayal of the Islamic concept of social welfare. The eruption of socialists or "Islamic socialists" has acted as shock-therapy. The advocate of

Islamic social system have now risen to the occasion and have condemned Capitalism as severely as Socialism. In both the camps there are "Hidden Persuaders", "Status Seekers" and "Waste-makers". This fact is depicted in Dr. Iqbal's

خلق خدا کی گہات میں رند و فقیہ و میر و پیر
تیرے جہاں میں ہے یہی گردش صبح و شام ابھی

"The epicureans, the jurists, the elite and the preceptors are lying in wait to attack God's creatures. This Universe of God continues to experience the same unpleasant alteration of morning and evening."

If some obscurantists among the Muslim Savants have suffered a severe exposure, the Islamic Socialists have also been knocked into cocked hat. They tried to build a pyramid on a pin by taking a vociferous stand on Qaid-e-Azam's solitary innocent expression of Islamic Socialism and Dr. Iqbal's casual observations about Socialism. "Islamic Socialism" as a regular term is as offensive as "Islamic Capitalism". For instance those who support Free Economy cannot venture to call it "Islamic Capitalism" as it will amount to blaspheming Islam. Similarly the Socialists should be open and above board and not conceal their vulnerability by the fig-leaf of a casual remark. They cannot cogently say that Socialism is not a self-contained creed. According to Bertrand Russel, it has Religion which is Historical Materialism which means that the system of production at any given time gave shape to religion, law and ethics of that time. The Politics of Socialism is class-war, which means that the workers should dispossess the

Possessing Class by naked force. The Economics of Socialism is the Theory of Surplus Value which means that labour creates value and the worker gets very small portion and the rest goes to the capitalist. Karl Marx denounced Religion as "the opium of masses." But he could not dispense with religion altogether, he had to contrive the creed of Historical Materialism to support his Theory of Communism. He thus vindicated Voltaire's observation that if one drives out religion by the front door, it returns by the back-door. It is an obvious fallacy that the system of Economic Production is the basic determinant. This is belied not only by the rise and progress of every true religion in its own time, but the Russian Communist Revolution itself is a lie direct to this lop-sided Marxian view. Russia was not an industrial country whereas Germany and England were highly developed industrial countries. According to Marx, Communism should have emerged where the Capitalistic System of production had created a scene of sharp conflict between the workers and their exploiters, that is in England and Germany. But it occurred where Feudalism reigned supreme. Thus the Marxian creed of materialism went wrong and thus belied itself.

If one assesses materialism at a moral level, one finds that materialism means frosted sentiments. It cannot give birth to an ideology which inspires mercy and pity for the downs-and-outs. One cannot get inspiration from materialism for sincere well-wishing for the starving masses. Materialism even in its philosophic pose and poise cannot impel a man

to "lay balm on the lacerated hearts" of the victims of Capitalism. It is only when one rises above oneself that one can feel joy in courting dangers and hazards to soften the hard lot of mortality. It is a conspicuous contradiction in terms to say that by waging war against religion, Marxism can create a religion of dynamic humanism which is an aspect of other-worldliness. It is a capacity for altruism and this can arise as from religion only because it recognises the world as it is. But as an antidote against the virus of greed and lust, it exhorts that "life is more than meat and body is more than raiment." Thus Marxism contradicts itself by basing its uplift plan on the denial of God. How can a Godless person feel kindly for people who have been mown down by the stream-roller of materialism? The class-war, as the Politics of Marxism, proves that a materialist philosophy seeks its fruition by a sanguinary technique. It is because materialism can neither win hearts nor mould minds, whereas the God-oriented religion of Islam has done both. It so swayed the minds that the rich sections showered their possessions on the poor classes. Class-war is, therefore, the natural concomitant of an atheistic scheme for an economic regeneration which soon perishes because what rises by violence perishes by violence.

Now about the Theory of Surplus Value. This is the hub and pivot of the Marxian Communism. According to Karl Marx the value of an object depends on the labour invested in its production. He pontificates that the workers are paid wages hardly enough for their bare necessities, the surplus is

usurped by their enemy—the Capitalist. Thus arises a natural war, and till the workers defeat their exploiters the value which they create will never be theirs. To common sense what constitutes value in an object is the demand for it. There is no such thing as fixed value. The value of a commodity depends at any time and place on its available supply in response to the demand for it. Thus what determines the value of an object is the number of people who want it and the strength of their competing desire for it. The most intrinsically valuable things in the whole world are the common things, the absolute necessities, food, shelter, clothing, fuel. If their supply runs short, people will give everything to obtain them. By the Marxian definition the Egyptian Pyramids upon which millions of labourers worked from daylight to candle-light and from candle-light to dawn, should be the most valuable objects. But, in fact, they have a curiosity value. People would pay to see them only if they have the necessary where-withals of life. If a person owned the Pyramids, but had no money to buy bread, he would give them at a throw-away price to get a meal. It is the same with gold. If the common necessities cease to be common, men will give much gold to procure them. It is obvious that the Theory of Surplus value is trotted out to foment class-war. It was culture-killing world that Marx envisaged. Rich pay high prices for rarities, because a thing of beauty is a joy for ever. According to Marx the rarities should have little or no price because labour invested in them is far less than their market value.

The flaws enumerated above vitiate the Marxian Theory of Surplus Value. The God-less communists come out into the open with a welfare on their lips but warfare in their hearts. After some negative career, they are caught in the contradictions of their Theory of Communism. Heinrich Heine, a great German intellectual observed in 1842: "Communism is the secret name of the dread antagonist setting proletariat rule with its consequences against the present bourgeois regime. It will be a frightful duel. How will it end? No one knows. We know this much: Communism is the dark hero destined for a great, if temporary role, in the modern tragedy."

Now we come down to the brass-tacks. We give a brief survey of the working of Communism in the world. It first came in Russia. Lenin who had no original views, was clean bowled by the Marxian Theory and was hypnotized by the personality of Marx. When he launched it into practice, he soon found that it brought great havoc in its wake. While retaining his belief he had to abandon Communism and replace it by the N.E.P. (New Economic Policy) which also proved to be a damp squib. After Lenin's death, Stalin had to stage a still greater departure. His successive Five Year Plans were an epitaph on Communism. He had to employ foreign technicians on fabulous salaries to keep things moving.

During Khrushchev's visit to London in April, 1956, he was hard put to answer the queries shot at him by the Labourites. In reply to his appeal to the Social Democrats of Europe, the Council of the Socialist International sent him a tart rejoinder by say-

ing: "Where the Communists are in power, they have distorted every freedom, every right of the workers, every political gain and every human value won after a struggle lasting generations." George Brown, a British Trade Unionist observed: "The inequalities, the unhappiness and the oppression just can't be hidden or ignored. . . . There is a bureaucratic minority (in a Communist country) that is extremely comfortably off by any standards." Alexei Pludek, a writer, said at the Czechoslovak Writers' Congress in Prague (22nd-24th April, 1956). "Young people will not be prompted to self-sacrifice by a high functioning who with the money of the working class buy a villa in Prague, a country house and a private automobile in addition to Government cars—especially if he fortifies that villa and surrounds it with armed men, possibly to protect himself against the working class." A great American educationist—John Dewey was enamoured of the Soviet educational system. But he was sorely disillusioned, when he found that a child of twelve drifting as a beggar as a result of the terrible Stalin-made famine, was sentenced to death for stealing things at the railways. A great French litterateur and a Nobel Prize-winner, Andre Gide turned away from Communism when after his trip to the U.S.S.R., he witnessed the growth of the new bourgeoisie, its toadyism, its conformity and its callous disregard of human sufferings.

It would be a down-right criminality to import crimson Kremlinism in our Islam-based homeland of Pakistan. What has failed in its native land, can never succeed in the God-conscious and the Quran-

oriented society. But the best way to keep Communism at bay is to set our own house in order by implementing the Islamic values which take full cognizance of the ills and ailments of society. It was in the middle of the 19th century that Karl Marx detected a growing rift between the 'Haves' and the 'Have-nots'. But fourteen hundred years ago, Hazrat Amr bin al-Aas submitted a report to Hazrat Umar (God be pleased with him) on the economic conditions obtaining in Egypt. A remarkable passage occurs in his report: "The crowds of husbandmen who blacken the land may be compared to a swarm of industrious ants; and their native indolence is quickened by the lash of the taskmaster. But the riches they extract are unequally shared between those who labour and those who possess." This is quoted by M.N. Roy in his book *The Historical Role of Islam* (page 11). He says: "That was a view far in advance of time. The idea of social equity was unknown in all the lands of ancient civilization."

Socialism cannot have a moment's chance if, as Islam directs, interest, usury, rack-renting, exploitation of workers, accumulation of wealth, hoarding of commodities and the state policy of splendid aloofness from the ravages of rapacious "private ownership" are abolished in an effective manner. The cry for the system of *Khulafa-i-Rashideen* is deceptive, so long as the leaders and the rulers steeped in the spiritual colours of the Pious Caliphs are not forthcoming. How can the self-obsessed and money-minting pleaders establish *Khilafat-i-Rashidah*. As we cannot afford to wait for spiritual trans-

formation, Pakistani Nation shall have to devise a Constitution under which the Head of the Islamic State in Pakistan is made to live in the manner of the Pious Caliphs. He shall have to be denuded of the enormous emoluments, immense immunities, and extravagant amenities which characterise the offices of the present Heads of the Secular States. This will be an acid test of an aspirant's integrity. At present it is the regal panopoly of a Head of State which attracts the political aspirants. We lay down tests for every minor functionary, but there is no test and no qualification for one who had to preside over the destiny of our nation and who at the election time makes prodigal promises of establishing *Khilafat-i-Rashidah*. He should under the Islamic Constitution be made to emulate the superb example of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the Pious Caliphs, in his day-to-day life. He should feel saddled with responsibility of taking personal interest in the social welfare. He should be as answerable to the nation for his each and every act as were the Pious Caliphs whom he pretended to emulate at the time of election.

Human Society is likened to fish. It stinks from the head downward. If the Head of the Islamic State is put in the strait-jacket of the Islamic teachings, he will radiate wholesome influences and the legislators and the Ministers around him will inevitably emulate his example. The affluent class will automatically adjust itself. It is truly said: *عمالكم اعمالكم* "It is our rulers who manifest the worth of our actions." This provision in the constitution will queer the pitch for

the Socialists who just capitalize our deviations from Islam. They step into the breach not because of the illusory merit of their plan but because of the conspicuous absence of real Islam in our individual and collective life.

Our present social set-up is like the Leaning Tower. If we do not keep it straight, we shall then invite the danger prophesied in Hadith which says: "There will be no Resurrection until there is an uprising of the scum of the earth and the ruin of the (exploiting) upper classes." Dr. Iqbal referred to this when he said:

اسی دریا سے آلتھی ہے وہ موج تند جولان بھی
نہنگوں کے نشیمن جس سے ہوتے ہیں تم و بالا

"From this sea (of exploitation) arises that destructive surge which upsets the abodes of the economic sharks"

Thus before us lies the scene of social confusion. The Holy Quran refers to this and says: *نَاطَاتٍ بَعْضُهُنَّ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ* "Layers of darkness, one above another." When some turn to alien *isms* for panacea, the Holy Quran says: *فَإِنْ تَذَهَبُونَ* "Whither thou are you going." The sovereign remedies lie in the Holy Quran. Dr. Iqbal says:

آن کتاب زندہ قرآن حکیم حکمت او لا یزال است قدیم
حرف اوریب نے تبدیل نے آیہ اش شرمندہ تاویل نے
صد جہاں تازہ در آیات اوست عصرها پیچیدہ در آیات اوست

"The Quran is a Book of living wisdom which is eternal and immutable. Its word is above doubt and is unchanging and unchangeable. Its verses are not amenable to subversive interpretation.

They enshrine in them a dynamic Universe. The epochs riddled with problems lie embalmed in its verses."

Communism is a violent reaction against Capitalism. Hence, strictly speaking, it is a Reactionary not a Revolutionary Movement. If the capitalists mend their manners or the State successfully checks their exploitation, they can forestall Socialism. In Sweden, the State has not dispossessed the Possessing Classes nor has it nationalized industries. But it has assumed a very effective control in the industrial managements and has thus rendered Free Enterprise safe for society. It is sometime called a Socialist country, not because it has accepted the Marxian Socialism, but because it has drawn the sting from the Capitalistic mode of production.

Islam has such effective regulations against accumulation and concentration of wealth as leave no room for the growth of Capitalism. Just as Islam obliterated slavery by its divine humanism, it undermines and eventually ends Capitalism provided its wholesome regulations and salutary checks are enforced in the letter and the spirit. How can Capitalism have a moment's chance in the Religion of Muhammad (peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) who felt a spiritual joy in being Empty-Purse Proud. He lived Islam to its perfection and exemplified its excellences in his own life. This is why the Holy Quran says:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ

"Verily you have in the Prophet of God an excellent model." (xxxiii: 2)

If a Muslim Society fashions itself after the Excellent Model, there can be no division of "Haves" and "Have-nots." . . . If it does arise, it is clear indication that the Muslim Society has ceased to follow the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). It is the Holy Prophet (and not his wealthy Companions), we have to keep before us as our Divinely-ordained Immaculate Guide, in all walks of life. A Purse-Proud Muslim can never be a true follower of the Messenger of God, who said : الفقر فخرى "My voluntary poverty is a matter of pride for me." The Socialists step in when Muslims step away from Islam. The Communists and the Socialists sing paeans of praises of Marx and Lenin for their humanism. But even the most planned spectacular instance of their love of the poor cannot stand comparison with the instances of routine humanitarianism in the Holy Prophet's life. The heart-warming love that emanated from his actions can eclipse the whole lives of the progenitors of Socialism. It is only when we turn a blind eye to the Holy Prophet's Immaculate Model, that Socialism dazzles and baffles us. With all their much-vaunted solicitude for the poor and the exaggerated accounts of their achievements, Marx and Lenin are not equal to the dust under the feet of the Holy Prophet, every moment of whose life was a sermon on service and sacrifice for mankind. If on confrontation with the Communist evangelists, we recount the instances of the Holy Prophet's life, their propaganda will evaporate like a mist in the sunshine. But if we begin to hum and haw and spell out sophisticated justifications for ownership as something inviolable

in one way or other, we invite the invasion of Socialism. When we do so we take a cue from the Capitalist Economist and not from the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), whose own precept and example sound the death-knell of the Capitalists. Dr. Iqbal pointed to this when he said :

چيست قرآن ؟ خواجہ را پيغام مرگ
دستگیر بندہ بے ساز و برگ

"The Holy Quran is a death-knell for the money-minting Capitalist. It ministers to the needs of the poor and the penniless."

II

THE HUMAN SITUATION

It is the predicament of our age that we realise that planning is necessary, but also know that wrong planning may be disastrous. It has always been open to question how far institutions can foster religious experience. In an age of planning, when the number of institutions is increasing, and these institutions are being coordinated, the problem becomes still more acute. On the other hand even those who look at planning with the eyes of an engineer, and are inclined to believe that their approach to social affairs is all-embracing, realise that the purely technical and functional view is incomplete, and that when society is directed by purely utilitarian motives it lacks an inner dynamic. In times of prosperity and peace it looked as if man could live on Hollywood and ice-cream soda alone, but now that mankind is engaged in a life-and-death struggle for civilisation even the engineer realises that society is rooted in deeper layers of human soul than he ever thought.

Diagnosis of Our Time

by KARL MANNHEIM

Dynamic change is the keynote of our time. We apparently stand at the threshold of one of those momentous crises in human history when mankind moves into a new age. Such

crucial periods are of supreme importance, because their outcome may determine man's course for many generations—perhaps for centuries.

Challenge spells struggle. This is certainly true of today. The outstanding feature of modern life is the vast flood of new knowledge and power which is sweeping in upon the established tradition of the past—venerated beliefs, cherished customs, settled details of everyday life, portentously alter before our startled eyes. Across our modern world, strange winds are blowing. Perplexed by new problems and aware of coming trials, we confront a formidable future.

Scientific Humanism

by LOTHROP STODDARD

Apart from the "purple patches" created by the revolutionary role of Prophets who give a "biological renewal" to mankind, the world history abounding in servility and frustration reads like a harrowing drama of the Martyrdom of Man. In every age and clime man has exploited his fellows. If in the days of yore it were the Pharaohs of Egypt who set men to make bricks without straw and build the famous Pyramids to gratify their curious notions of self-immortality, it is the Fords of today who oppress workers in so crafty, so subtle, so crooked a way that one does not know whom to blame. The atrocities are the same, but they are perpetrated under different labels.

Our civilisation is what the Great War I 'made' it. It was rent to pieces by that huge conflict. Ever since that sanguinary upheaval there has been no

serenity, no social equilibrium, no poise, no agreed aim. The dizzy-go-round of the Post-Great War conferences and conclaves extending right up to *World War II*, failed to heal the breaches and banish all causes of war. While Capitalism, usury, instability of society and maldistribution of wealth of the pre-War period are still there, new dogmas and doctrines have swamped the world to kill and not to cure mankind and to forge new chains of bondage under the pious, poetic plea of economic salvation. What the course of events suggests in a most indubitable manner is that the slavery of ancient times in the most hideous form has returned. Brain-washing and indoctrination to cast people in one mould are recreating conditions highly favourable to the growth of the worst type of serfdom. Religion has either been completely gagged or gashed and gored to death by the evangelists of the New Materialism.

With a growing sense of disillusionment, civilised mankind has become more and more aware of its losses than of its gains. Civilisation itself, with its morbid growths has become its enemy. Writers of the type of D.H. Lawrence exploited the situation and won the boisterous, blustering youth to their cult of exalting barbarism. The resultant social upset continues. There is less reasonableness, less tolerance and more violence. Public needs have lost all harmony with the desires and aspirations of the individual. In short, society is divided against itself. This is the beginning of the end of genuine civilisation, general enlightenment, and settled prosperity and peace. In Russia the Hammer-and-Sickle calls

forth all the dark sentiments of the one-sixth of humanity. Swastika, once the symbol of the Stone Age, signalised the recrudescence of mediaeval barbarism and half Europe for some years lay writhing under the fire-eating, heel-clicking and brass-lunged dictators.

I beg to be excused for quoting some master-minds to bring into sharp relief the different aspects of the crisis which threatened the very existence of mankind on the eve of the World War II. G. Bernard Shaw in one of his illuminating discourses, he delivered during his world tour in 1932-33, dwelt on the decline and fall of the ancient civilisation and the disaster that threatened the present one. In the course of his lecture, he said, "Thanks largely to the researches of Professor Flanders Petrie we know of five or six civilisations which were just like our own civilisation, having progressed in the same direction, to the same artistic climaxes, the same Capitalistic climaxes, the same democratic climaxes as we, and they all perished. They reached a certain point and then they collapsed, because they had no internal stability. When they grew into huge populations crowded into big cities, the internal strains shattered them, the civilisation sank back into primitive life for survivors. That puts us in a very different mental attitude from our fathers and grandfathers, because what we are up against now is the fact that we too have reached the edge of the precipice over which these civilisations fell and were dashed to pieces. There is no mistaking the situation; the symptoms are the same; the difficulties are the same; and the possibilities of destruc-

tion are much greater. Are we going to bridge the gulf or fall helplessly into it? Can we, if I may change the metaphor, steer our ship round the headlands on which all the ancient navigators were wrecked?"

There can be no better and more lurid and lucid description of the problem that stares humanity in the face. It is so inexorable, so inescapable and so ubiquitous, that mankind can neither stave it off by striking a new route nor can laugh it away without serious consequences. The problem cries for an immediate solution, if humanity is not to slide down the crumbling edge of a bottomless abyss of destruction. As no sane and safe solution in the past was forthcoming, the inevitable came to pass and the whole world was overtaken by the most calamitous Armageddon in the history of mankind.

The seed of the new catastrophe lies embedded in the inhuman economic iniquities. Several leaders of scientific thought attribute the social disequilibrium of the last few decades to the fact that our knowledge of external nature has got far too ahead of our knowledge of human nature. The brunt of this whole catastrophe falls on religion which has from time immemorial claimed to be man's indispensable guide and "the one source which can give moral purpose and nobility and meaning to the life of man." The decline of West, which synchronised with the Capitalist crisis, is due to the failure of Christianity to meet the challenge of Materialism which even today clouds the horizon of human

knowledge. The intellectual inadequacy of the Christian creed to cope with the problems of the day has brought religion itself into discredit in the West. Religions in the East face an equally grim and gloomy situation which they must tackle successfully or forfeit their claim to supremacy over human mind. Lord Lothian in his historic Convocation Address delivered at the Aligarh University in 1938, gave us an apt picture of the problem that faces the religions of the East. He said, "Will the two great religions of India, Hinduism and Islam, withstand the impact of modern critical, scientific spirit, better than the religious orthodoxies of the West have done.

"That seems to me a vital question which the intellectual and religious leaders must face, if the same disasters are not to overtake East that have overtaken the West. The scientific spirit will certainly gradually disintegrate those elements of superstition and ignorance which still dwell amongst the masses. That will be all to the good. But will it also undermine the more fundamental, more spiritual teachings of the two great religions in the minds of those university-trained men and women who are destined to be the leaders of political and cultural and industrial life for the next generation or two.

"Religion must not only give man the key to the riddle of the universe, it must show him with scientific accuracy how to control new forces which now threaten to destroy rather than to benefit mankind and how he is to overcome unemployment, undeserved inequality, oppression, exploitation and

war and other collective ills as well as the personal and family discords which threaten individual happiness. Man, just because science has multiplied without solving his problems, is looking to religion to supply the answer to his doubts and difficulties. Religion, if it is to keep or recover its place, must give an answer which is spiritually scientific, and therefore invariable in its results."

There is no denying the fact that after World War II humanity found itself in a blind alley. Man's mind is still racked and tormented by sickening doubts and apprehensions. It is an extremely embarrassing state of affairs. In the realm of ideas man is in conflict with his own 'self.' He has lost his soul. In the work-a-day world, he is at war with his fellows. His irrepressible ego and his insatiable lust for lucre have hurled him into a paroxysm of pain. The paralysis of mind and body has cast him a helpless prey into the lap of Nationalism and Godless Socialism. Like the Faust of old he has sold his soul for a false sense of security against the raging chaos around him. He hitches his frail wagon to these new meteors. The new ideologies which sway the modern mind derive their sap and substance from the psychological forces of hate and suspicion which spell disaster to human soul and atrophy its latent spiritual energy. Hence their failure is writ large on the horizon. Surely the present epoch is the most critical one in human history.

The topsy-turvy state of human society and the conflicting solutions which are being flung from every conceivable quarter stagger imagination.

One finds a topsy-turvy world—*sans* rudder, *sans* order and *sans* pilot. It is sick and reeling! Every pseudo-thinker is purveying his perplexing panaceas.

All these much-vaunted measures bear the stamp of high-strung emotionalism. They are at best the curate's egg good only in parts. Many of them are obviously quack nostrums existing merely on the strength of a noisy propaganda. Their specious gloss and tinsel deceive a casual observer. They are like the Apple of Sodom which turns into dust and ashes in the mouth.

In short, man is headed off from the fine and splendid thing that his life might be, by every kind of folly and stupidity. How to eradicate the folly and to enlighten the stupidity? Unless some effective remedy is found, this scheme of time and space will become a huge joke. "A flare of vulgarity, an empty laugh braying across the mysteries." It would be a gross fallacy to regard it as our destined end because deep down in our hearts we know that we have a glorious purpose to fulfil. The theme of this little book is to prove that only Islam by its vitalising force, can ethically prepare man for the onerous and crushing tasks set to him by science. It alone will enable him to assert himself against the forces of Darkness, and maintain his personality in full flower here and hereafter. It alone will triumph over industrial organisation actuated by devouring competition and in the end will establish civilisation with no conflict of religious and political values.

All social philosophies are rival institutions and are surcharged with hatred for one another.

They ride into power on the heart-throb of national frustration.

The Capitalist motto is "Everybody for himself and devil take the hindmost."

The Communist motto is "From each according to his ability to each according to his needs."

The Socialist motto is "From each according to his worth, to each according to his work."

The Fascist motto is "Each for all and all for each. Nothing outside the State, nothing against the State, everything inside the State."

In Communism the social unit is the group. It destroys family, crushes personal liberty and regimentalises industry.

The complete transformation of private and competing capitals into a united and collective capital is the programme of the Socialists.

Nihilism and Anarchism are the opposite extremes of political despotism. Communism and Socialism are the other extremes of industrial individualism.

Monopoly—the climax of Capitalism, is a tumour which pains all and must be lanced and eradicated by the instrument of all—the State.

Communism and Fascism arise out of the same mood, represent the same faith and both are reactions against rapacious Capitalism. They both seek to create a new social order by first ironing out the individual and then planning him into a totalitarian mosaic. Only when Islam has given spiritual content to a social order and has reintegrated the forces of

one's own personality, then and not till then, humanity will achieve millennium. Then will joyful tongues of untold millions welcome the rising sun of Islam. Then will man stand up and say :

"LIBERTY IS MINE!"

III

WAR ON WAGE SLAVERY

You make honey, but not for yourselves,
bees, you make the land fruitful, but not for
yourselves, oxen.

(Translation of a Latin verse)

—
The seed ye sow, another reaps ;
The wealth ye find, another keeps ;
The robes ye weave, another wears ;
The arms ye forge, another bears.

—Shelley

The social teachings of Islam which work against Capitalism are based on the divine philosophy. The whole panorama of nature testifies to their truth and proves them as the only practicable course to establish peace in the world. When we observe the Universe we find that all kinds of creatures are adequately provided with the means of living. In the domain of vegetable life we find that plants and trees suck their food from the earth by their roots and from the air by their leaves. The form and size of leaves and roots are such as are best fitted to imbibe the required nourishment. In the realm of animal life, the same law is at work. The meanest worm that crawls finds its food ready at hand. Dearth of food does not

meet our eyes. When a young one of an animal sees the light of the day, it instinctively knows its store of food and turns to it when hungry. This post-natal consciousness increases with the growth of life. There is no stage where a living being is left to itself and Nature retires from active help. The treatment is different with the different species and this is according to the purpose which each living being has to fulfil in life. In the animal and plant life Nature is very bountiful. But its bountifulness to human beings takes on a different form. Human beings are dowered with intellect besides instinct to fend for themselves. Nature does not cease to be a Guardian Angel. But it does put off the role of an active chaperon. It rests content with its gift of conscious intelligence to human beings. But for this discrimination in treatment, man would not have faced the embarrassing problem of livelihood which dogs his footsteps through life. But at the same time he would not have been a whit better than dumb-driven cattle, and the miracles of science, that we witness all round us, would also have been non-existent. The world would not have been the place as we find it today. It would have been a mere menagerie.

This ceaseless game of hide-and-seek that humanity has been set to play with Nature is all to the good of man. If man had got all without striking a blow for it, his intellect would have lain dormant for want of proper exercise. The Holy Book says :

"Our Lord is He Who gave to each (created) thing its form and nature and further, gave (it) guidance." (xx : 50)

God has created resources in abundance. He has also taught man how to tap and exploit them. It is now for man to exert himself to keep the wolf from the door.

Man is dependent on Nature for his livelihood. He has all the wants which are experienced by the animals. Like them he wants air to breathe, food to eat and water to drink. He replenishes the waning store of vitality by the liberal use of creature comforts. If the daily nourishment by consumption is not forthcoming, his bodily machine will come to a standstill for want of motive power. The earth has in plenty all that he needs. He has only to exert himself properly to eke out his living. The Holy Quran points to this :

"It is We Who have placed you with authority on earth, and provided you therein with means for the fulfilment of your life." (vii : 10)

The Quranic verse signifies that the earth contains an inexhaustible store of food and the fear of famine or dearth is unnatural. If the gaunt spectre of scarcity stalks the land it is easily ascribable to the misuse or wrong handling of natural resources. This calamity overtakes man to punish him for the haphazard manipulation of Nature's gifts. If man only learns to earn properly and behave properly, poverty will become an unpleasant myth. The very idea of poverty has no place in the divine scheme of things because the Holy Quran is full of God's promises of abundance. It tells us that all that is on land and sea is harnessed to the service of man. The sun, the

moon, the stars, the seas and the mountains are the repositories of all that is necessary for human well-being. The vast and varied treasures ensconced in the lap of Nature exist to fulfil man's needs and oil the wheels of his life.

"And He has subjected to you, as from Him all that is in the heavens and on the earth."
(xlv : 13)

In spite of these promises of plenty and abundance, man has to toil and moil to make his living. When he ceases to endeavour he ceases to exist. If animals get all they want without any effort on their part, it is to bring out the basic contrast between the spheres of the human and animal life. The story of man's struggle is summed up in the Quranic verse thus :

"That man can have nothing but what he strives for." (liii : 39)

But even among human beings there are great differences. All are not cast in the same mould. Some are more intelligent than others. Some are physically fit while others are not. This difference is reflected in the difference of their standards of living. In the struggle for existence, mental and physical soundness counts for much. A mentally deficient or a physically unfit person drops out of picture. While those who possess a sound mind in a sound body get the palm. The social gradations and stratifications are not quite artificial as they are often imagined by the social extremists. They are the necessary corollary of multifarious factors—heredity and environment being the

most important, as they affect human beings one way or the other. Consequently, the fruits of human endeavours also vary with various persons. But for this difference, human life will be dull, drab and colourless. Social inequality born of varying natural talents is inescapable. Any attempt to standardise and regimentalise humanity will have a boomerang effect. The Quran says :

“Verily, (the ends) ye strive for are diverse.”
(xcii : 4)

When men differ in mind and body, their efforts to earn their livelihood and the consequent rewards must also differ. The unavoidable sequel is the crystallisation of the different strata of society. Variety is the spice of life so long as it does not split up society into warring and wrangling groups of victims and victimisers. A natural social classification inherent in the scheme of things is indicated by the Holy Book. It says :

“It is He Who hath made you (His) agents, inheritors of the earth : He hath raised you in ranks some above others.” (vi : 165)

At another place the Holy Quran makes a more pointed reference to this state of affairs in a verse :

“It is We Who divide between them their livelihood in the life of this world and We raise some of them above others in ranks.” (xliii : 32)

In still another verse the Holy Book says :

“God has bestowed His gifts of sustenance more freely on some of you than on others.”
(xvi : 71)

All these verses bring home to us that some sort of inequality is an ordained fact of nature, because it is due to our unequal mental and corporeal equipments which we bring to bear on the struggle of life. No system of ideology can pass sponge over the face of nature and create a goose-step uniformity. It will be like making water run uphill or twisting a rope of sand. But it is certainly precarious to stress this fact too much. It might create an illusion in the minds of many that the present chaos born of social divisions is also natural, and that the strong have a right to grow stronger at the cost of the weak. Far from it. Everybody who sees the light or the day has a birth-right to get enough to appease his natural appetites. It is quite a different affair that one man cannot earn as much or more than another who is superior to him in mind and body. But the total destitution or starvation of even a single sentient being is very unnatural. If one man interferes with another's honest efforts, he is guilty of an act of criminal trespass. One has a right to earn one's own living, but it is oppression, pure and simple, to rob others of their living or impoverish them to gain economic ascendancy over them. The tendencies now at work are that people amass riches and build factories or start business to subjugate others to their will and volition. The result is economic thralldom which is worse than chattel slavery and is fraught with more dire possibilities. In the ancient times, a slave was the property of his master. It was in the interest of the master to keep his slave hale and hearty. He used to take as much care of his slave as he would of his

inanimate property. Hence the slave could always count on getting two meals a day. He was never thrown on the streets or left in the lurch. But nowadays labourers, though free, are worse than slaves. The factory boss squeezes all vitality out of his employees. When they are incapacitated, he quietly sacks them without any loss of 'face' or money. He can replenish his depleted labour force by a fresh and more favourable recruitment. This is exploitation in all its grim nakedness. Slavery in the sense of legal ownership of one man by another is dead as dodo. Society does not now countenance slavery as it existed in the ancient times. But if we view the present organisation of society at close quarters we find that it is tyrannical and coercive and men are not free. Man is not sold or purchased in a slave market. But it is extremely revolting that he is his own auctioneer in the wage-market. He must sell himself daily for a stipulated period at whatever is offered to him by his master—the factory owner. As such, he is a mere cog in the Capitalist Machine. The complaint is not why a worker has to work. Work he must that he might live. What evokes protest is that he enjoys no sense of security despite his strenuous work. He has no command over the economic system from which he draws sustenance. Political freedom without economic liberty is, therefore, "a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." Business, which should be the servant, has become the master of men. Ramsay Macdonald, in his book *Socialism—Critical and Constructive*, strikes a strident note to this effect when he says, "I must

here point out that the vast and intricate mechanism of production, exchange and distribution—of factory, market, and shop—has become as though it were a thing good and complete in itself, has become the task of men's lives, decides what relations men and nations are to bear to each other, and has imposed upon the whole of society its rules and its expediency, its working and its results as though these expressed the ends of society, were paramount to morals, and belonged to the eternal things of nature, and not merely to the temporary interests of classes of men. Essentially, this is of the nature of slavery, a slavery, perhaps which is felt only when men have reached a fairly high state of intelligence, but a slavery which must cut keenly before men can proceed very far towards freedom, or society becomes a rational organisation to promote certain human ends."

The Holy Quran has provided an adequate safeguard against man's inhumanity to man. It lays down that the indigent and the destitute have a fixed share in the property of the wealthy. The Quranic verse runs as follows:

"And those in whose wealth is a recognised right for the (needy) who asks and him who is prevented (for some reason from asking)."
(lxx: 24)

Islam exercises no curbing or burking influence on the growth of natural endowments. It does not withhold the right of earning one's livelihood. If this right were denied, all economic activities would come

to a dead stop. People sweat and labour in the hope that the rewards of all their pains and exertions should be theirs, and no extraneous agency should filch them away. Islam goes one better. It extends the same right to women who can also earn in their own proper sphere and can retain their earnings without fear of deprivation. It lays the same stress on this as it does on establishing prayers and keeping fasts. The Holy Book says :

i.e. "To men is allotted what they earn, and to women what they earn." (iv : 32)

According to the Holy Quran a worker can demand his wages as a matter of right. The employer is enjoined to pay them up before the labourer's perspiration dries up. The relation between an employer and his employee in Islam does not smack of serfdom as it is in the Capitalistic economy. Political freedom in the bourgeois society is an empty phrase because it is devoid of social significance.

As Nicolas Berdyaev says, "Freedom which has no knowledge of compassion becomes demoniacal. Man ought not only to ascend but also to descend." Marxism supersedes it with economic freedom. It means a genuine improvement on the Capitalistic regime. But its nemesis lies in its denial of spiritual values. It creates social hypnosis by hypostatizing society. Servile dependence on society is the lot of the individual. Truth and justice are subservient to the vagaries of the revolutionary class struggle. In course of time the aristocracy of a group founded on social assortment, becomes supreme. But in Islam the

concept of human brotherhood is so vital and basic that it imbues and colours every aspect of society and leaves no room for any crude and cruel social assortment. In the Muslim society no man can lord it over others merely on the strength of a swollen purse. It is only spiritual attainments and moral excellences that exalt a person and confer upon him a superior status in the social hierarchy. In Islam the social planet revolves round the spiritual values. Thus there is no nobility or vilenage of any kind.

This supremacy of spiritual values as the goal of human life is beautifully brought out in the following verses :

"Nay some I have seen will choose a beehive
for their sign
and gloss their soul-delusion with a muddled
thought,
picturing a skep of straw, the beekeeper's
device,
a mill-owner's workshop, for totem of their
tribe;
Not knowing the high goal of our great
endeavour
is spiritual attainment, individual,
at all cost to be sought and at all cost pursued,
to be won at all cost and at all cost assured."

—Bridges

IV

PRIVATE OWNERSHIP AND SOCIAL WELFARE

The situation of the rich and the poor, like the algebraic terms of plus and minus are in direct opposition to and destructive of each other.

—Charles Hall

Let him who expects one class of society to prosper in the highest degree, while the other is in distress, try whether one side of his face can smile while the other is pinched.

—Fuller

Private property is the life-blood of Capitalism. Its abolition is the blazing kernel of the Socialistic Creed. Capitalism as we find it today, has come to signify a religion of money or Dollar Dictatorship as it is some time called. In the eloquent words of H.G. Wells, "Capitalism is something—none of us knows how to define it, but we called it generally the Capitalist System—a complex of traditional usage, uncontrolled acquisitive energy and perverted opportunities, wasting life." In short, he dubbed it a lack of system. But under it there has been an enormous process of expansion of capital, compared with which the expanding force of gases seems very small

beer indeed. It is only in its maturer stages, when great stress is laid on private property, irrespective of its dire consequences, that it becomes an unmitigated evil. In its infancy, it exploited nature; in its adult years it exploited man, and disrupted social peace. In view of the destructive tendencies it has let loose on society, it stands self-condemned. Socialism has stepped on the world-stage to heal the injuries inflicted by Capitalism. It prescribes radical remedies. It wants to turn the present system upside down as a prelude to the inauguration of the New Socialistic Order. The Socialists hold that the nation is an invention of the Capitalists; the fatherland, a device for the bourgeois exploitation of the workers; the law a weapon for perpetuating the proletarian misery; religion an opiate of the masses; the school a breeding-ground for slaves; morality the refuge of the timid. Socialism launches an all-out offensive against what exists. The first institution to bear the brunt of its furious onslaught is private property. It starts with the dispossession, even forceful dispossession, of all owners of property. It envisages a cataclysmic change at the outset. It sublimates violence into revolutionary legalism. Islam like Socialism views with scorn and contempt the unsocial accumulation of wealth because of its disturbing repercussions on society. But it lays down a different course of action. It countenances as socio-economic gradations as do not prejudice or vitiate the welfare of society. The Holy Quran says:

"God doth enlarge, or grant by (strict measure the sustenance which He giveth) to

whomso He pleaseth." (xiii : 26)

It allows the earning of money and the possession of it. Private enterprise is not a taboo under Islam. It is disfavoured only when it assumes an aggressive role and cuts deep into the livelihood of the people at large. Under Islam, all avenues of such morbid developments in trade and business are closed.

When Islam permits the ownership of worldly possessions, it does so to promote private initiative and to save an individual from becoming a mere automaton. It lets him develop his business to the full so long as he does not disturb the social equilibrium. To ensure a healthy growth of trade and industry it sets bounds to the freedom of personal initiative. It is because private property and social welfare are vitally inter-related. Only they have to be maintained in a state of mutual harmony. To the individual engaged in an independent economic activity, an increased income as a reward for his exertions becomes an incentive for an economically efficient and beneficent activity. His business and his efficiency are of supreme importance to social welfare. But the rub comes when capitalistic ravages run riot and lead to extremely awful moral and social consequences. The undesirable aspects of private enterprise become conspicuous when the *entrepreneur*, especially by the one who owns the instruments of production, acquires a degree of economic, social and political ascendancy which is incompatible with communal well-being. On the other hand, if all the goods produced were equally divided, relatively little more would fall to the share of each person than a workman's daily

wage. And it would be no matter for surprise, if practically everything is exhausted and even nest-egg is not left to prevent complete breakdown of the economic machinery. In either case, there is a serious danger of society going to pieces.

It was this weird phenomenon which led Churchill to remark, "Capitalism is the unequal sharing of blessings. Socialism is the equal sharing of misery." "Let us have a system which ensures the greatest good of the greatest number." Islam undertakes to provide such a system. According to the Holy Quran all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth belongs to Allah (ii : 225). Ownership by Allah in the Islamic ideology means the state trusteeship for the good of the people. If anybody happens to possess wealth more than his fellowmen, he does so as a trust from God to fulfil the divine purpose of providing subsistence to others. If the possessor does so, he not only proves himself worthy of the grand trust, but he also becomes instrumental in achieving the divine purpose. God created the world and peopled it with creatures, created in His own image. He did not, thereafter, abdicate His divine supremacy as the Sustainer of the worlds. He took upon Himself the provision of reasonable livelihood to His creatures. This is embodied in several verses of the Holy Book :

"There is no moving creature
On earth but its sustenance
Dependeth on God." (xi : 6)

"And in heaven is
Your sustenance, as (also)
That which ye are promised." (li : 22)

"Kill not your children
On a plea of want ;—We
Provide sustenance for you
And for them." (vi : 151)

"And who gives you sustenance
From heaven and earth ?
(Can there be another) god
Besides God ?" (xxvii : 64)

"For God is He Who
Gives (all) sustenance,—
Lord of Power,—
Steadfast (for ever)." (li : 58)

"And We have provided therein
Means of sustenance,—for you
And for those for whose sustenance
Ye are not responsible." (xv : 20)

"He set on the (earth),
Mountains standing firm,
High above it,
And bestowed blessings on
The earth, and measured therein
All things to give them
Nourishment in due proportion
In four Days, in accordance
With (the needs of)
Those who seek (sustenance)." (xli : 10)

All these verses speak eloquently of the economic millennium as envisaged by Islam, and the Muslim State which claims to be God's vicegerent on earth, can only vindicate its grand title if it realises its immense implications in actual fact. It is God's will that no individual should be bereft of the reasonable means of existence and that he should be immune against any and every encroachment. A

State which fails to fulfil it, is corrupt and vicious and deserves not a day's existence. The Muslim State can only succeed in its divinely-entrusted mission, if the individuals who compose it also strip themselves of greed and avarice and disabuse their minds of all aggressive designs against one another. The Quranic verses quoted above bar the way to hoarding, profiteering and unsocial accumulation of wealth which we see today under the sinister regime of Capitalism, which has circumscribed the scope of the beneficial State activities by its shibboleths of *laissez-faire* and *laissez aller* and has launched the individuals on beggar-my-neighbour competition. Islam has nothing but scathing damnation for a system which is based on the diabolic principle of "everybody for himself and devil take the hindmost," and countenances or connives at dog-eat-dog methods of competition. In the Islamic scheme of things, the tragedy of a competitive social order has no place, because the creation of one over-rich man means economic servility for many. Surplus or unearned income is the seed-bed of class-conflicts. There can be no genuine and lasting brotherhood when an abysmal economic chasm yawns between various sections of society. There will be patronage on one side and sycophancy on the other. It is to guard against such unnatural distinctions leading to class domination that Islam condemns "profiteering proclivities" and a pathological craze for wealth. The Quranic verse : i.e.

"It is He Who hath created for you
All things that are on earth." (ii : 29)

is replete with great significance. It emphasises that what God has created, belongs collectively to the whole human society. Nobody has any right whatsoever to claim and usurp the lion's share of this "Common Pool". *Vis-a-vis* Capitalism the Communist formula of production and distribution has, as its propagandists claim, humanitarian bias because under Communism the rich are ironed out and the right of possession is limited to the needs of the individual. Thus it leaves little scope for the ugly sight of 'Top dogs' battenning on "Under-dogs". Fascism ensures a bare livelihood to the individual, but it first destroys his independent entity by merging him in the demoniacally-mechanised national whole. The individual has to pay a heavy price for a mess of pottage. View them how we may, both the socio-economic ideologies are lop-sided. Communists live for "The Proletariat" and the Fascists for "The Nation". The good they advocate is not common because Fascists exclude Socialists, and Communists exclude Capitalists from their "Eden". Last but not least, the good they offer is not good enough, because it excludes that good which is "choosing one's own good". But under the Quranic alternative there is no classification of proletariat and bourgeoisie. Man is treated as an active and useful agent in the field of social activities. His right to private property is recognised, but it is hedged round by salutary checks. An owner of property can use it, but not in an anti-social manner. All anti-social activities are banned. When an increase in one's possessions becomes incompatible with social well-being, Islam

draws the line there and then and any transgression of this limit comes under the Quranic prohibition. Superfluous wealth or العفو (what remains over) as the Holy Book designates it, is not to be retained by the owner. He must part with it in a manner which is conducive to communal good. In the Capitalistic regime the social and economic evils that flow from "the horn of plenty" possessed by any one individual are too well-known to need any elaboration. Excessive wealth corrupts its owner and vitiates his outlook on life. A huge store of sterile savings in a few hands is destructive of social harmony and concord. Harold Laski rightly observes, "The present system of capitalistic production stands condemned from almost any angle of analysis. It is psychologically inadequate because for most, by appealing mainly to the motive of fear, it inhibits the exercise of those qualities which make for rich life. It is morally inadequate also, for it confers rights upon those who have done nothing to earn them, and where these rights are related to effort, this, in turn, has no proportionate relevancy to social value. It makes a part of the community parasitic upon the rest; and it deprives most of the opportunity to live on a human plane of existence. It is also economically inadequate because it fails so to distribute the wealth it creates, as to offer the necessary conditions of right living to those dependent on its processes. No one, I think, can survey the temper of the working class today and honestly conclude that the business man retains the allegiance of the multitude. Some regard him with hate; most regard him with indifference. No considerable section

thinks of him as genuinely concerned for the purpose, a State must serve. He has lost the power to move his fellows on terms of moral appeal."

Laski incidentally throws into sharp relief the grim fact that in this era of Capitalism some live 'by owning' others live 'by obeying'. One section has what it likes, the other has to like what it has. This is inhuman and is repugnant to the very spirit of Islam. By designating all property as trust from God, Islam cuts away all ground from under the feet of capitalists. The honest enforcement of its teachings stimulates an equitable circulation and continual dispersal of wealth. Then and then alone wealth loses its malignant and anti-social attributes. When every individual must perforce part with the superfluous wealth (العفو) maldistribution and its dangerous aftermath are bound to vanish for good. Bacon, unconsciously but nonetheless truly, voiced the spirit of Islam when he said "wealth is like a heap of manure useless unless it is spread." Ruskin writes in the same strain. He likens the circulation of wealth in society to the circulation of blood in the human body. Unless all parts receive their due share of the stream of warm blood, body will not be sound. The question of the accumulation of wealth should be discussed in the light of the moral laws. It may be the result of immoral or unmoral policies. Or it may be the result of honest labours—"progressive energies and productive ingenuities. Some treasures are heavy with human tears as an ill-stored harvest with untimely rain; and some gold is brighter in sunshine than it is in the substance." Islam is alive to the dangerous possibilities of the concentration of

wealth in the hands of the few. It permits private property, but does not condone its social ravages by exploitation. Hazrat Abu Saeed Khudri relates that once the Holy Prophet (be peace on him) said that he whose means and resources are more than his genuine needs, should part with the surplus in favour of the destitute and indigent folk. He who has more than he needs, should give away the excess to the poor. The narrator says that the Holy Prophet (be peace on him) made mention of so many things, the excess of which over a genuine need of them, was not permissible that all those who were present felt that no one had any right to a surplus in anything. Hazrat Umar also once said that if he had realised it earlier, he would have made no delay in distributing the wealth of the wealthy among the poor and the emigrants (Mohalla Ibn Hazm محلى ابن حزم). It is authentically reported that once Hazrat Abu Obaidah and his three hundred men almost ran short of their provisions. Abu Obaidah ordered his men to bring all they had with them. He pooled all that was thus brought and distributed it equally among them all. (Ibid)

Hazrat Ali once said, "God has made it obligatory on the rich to minister to the needs of the poor. If, in spite of this obligation, the poor folk go unfed or unclothed or experience economic distresses, it only shows that the rich have not fulfilled the obligation laid on them by God. On the Day of Reckoning they will be called to account for this lapse on their part and God will inflict a grievous punishment on them.

A famous Muslim savant Ibn Hazm Zahiri maintains that in every town the rich people owe a duty to their poor neighbours. If the *Baitul-Mal* (Public Treasury) cannot relieve economic misery, a Muslim Sultan or Emir can compel the wealthy people to contribute to relief works. Their excess possessions can be forcibly taken away from them to fight out poverty from society. This process can continue until every man has just enough to eat and wear in all seasons and also has a house as a shelter against the inclemencies of weather.

The Holy Prophet (be peace on him) said, "The son of man has no greater right than he should have a house wherein he may live and a piece of cloth whereby he may cover his nakedness and a loaf of bread and some water (through Hazrat Usman in *Tirmizi*)."

The foregoing citations from the Traditions give one a deep insight into the spirit of the Quranic Social Order. The attitude of Islam towards the immortal institution of private property is characterised by sanity and sobriety. It is a golden mean between Capitalism and Communism. In its attitude to the right of private ownership, it eschews the excesses and atrocities of both. It leaves no room for the impoverishment of society which is inevitable under Capitalism. It also forbids recourse to violent expropriation of the property-owners as is ordained in the Gospel of Marx. The ideal of Islam is a world-wide fraternity. It does not seek to realise it by fratricidal war. Communism also pretends to lay the founda-

tions of a universal brotherhood. But its methods of achieving it are barbarous. It must smash first and build afterwards. "In order to bring in peace you must split open men's skulls," says Lenin. Zinovieff, an able interpreter of the Marxian creed, also speaks in the same vein. He says, "The hate-laden cry of rage is our delight." Brotherhood born out of hate and violence must naturally be a shaky structure and is bound to collapse under the impact of its internal strains and stresses. The Communistic brotherhood is, therefore, as poles apart from the Islamic fraternity blue-printed in the Quranic verses below :

"O ye who believe !
Fear God as He should be
Feared, and die not
Except in a state
Of Islam.

And hold fast,
All together, by the Rope
Which God (stretches out
For you), and be not divided
Among yourselves ;
And remember with gratitude
God's favour on you ;
For Ye were enemies
And He joined your hearts
In love, so that by His Grace ;
Ye became brethren ;
And ye were on the brink
Of the Pit of Fire,
And He saved you from it.
Thus doth He make
His Signs clear to you ;
That ye may be guided."

(iii : 102-103)

The Holy Prophet (may God bless and keep him) said : The Muslims are as a wall, one part of it supports another. The Muslims are all one body. If an eye is injured, the whole body suffers and if a foot is injured, the whole body suffers.

Economics and politics are not ends in themselves. They are a mere means to the high and noble end of human welfare. As private property has been potent for good and evil, it cannot be lightly passed over. Those who realise how deeply it is embedded in human economy, can appreciate the beneficent role assigned to it in the Islamic social philosophy. It is only under Islam that private property and social welfare cease to be antithetic. D. de Santillana in his enlightening contribution under the caption of "Law and Society" to *The Legacy of Islam*, writes :

"Potentially any man is entitled to anything because all the world's goods have been created for the use of man. By instituting property God has set a limit to this right ; thus enabling every man to know the lot assigned to him by God in the general stock of wealth and securing social order. But it would be erroneous to suppose that property as a right is unlimited—it finds a limit in its very nature and the end to which it may be subservient. Earthly goods are bestowed upon man in order that he may provide for his existence, that is to say, to employ them usefully, not to squander them without purpose, or according to his whim. Following the precepts of the Holy Quran and Traditions, Muslim law brands as a form of squandering any consumption of wealth not required by real use. In its eyes, prodigality is a

form of mental disease. It insists on moderation, following the middle way in the use of riches as most consonant with the nature of law and with the purpose for which God has bestowed His goods upon mankind."

* The above is a testimony from a non-Muslim writer on Islam. It makes clear that in Islam private ownership cannot be exercised to enslave others or to prejudice the well-being of any section of society as is the case in Capitalism. It is the innate religious idea which has given the Quranic social commandments a moral bent. In Islam the legitimacy of ownership depends on the moral sign attached to it, just as that of a mathematical quantity depends on the algebraical sign attached to it. In short, Islam purges private property of its vicious potentialities and lets it have beneficial growth. The Holy Prophet (be peace on him) says, "God helps man so long as man helps his brother." Again it is heartening to read a similar observation : "Man has no right in which God has no share ; God's share is His command to give everyone his due and not to encroach on what belongs to another." This rules out all possibility of capitalistic aggrandisement as well as forestalls and supersedes the Marxian methods of "expropriating the expropriators."

The mere fact of possession confers no plenary right of disposing of wealth in any manner the possessor likes. Any use of it which jeopardises public weal is repugnant to the spirit of the Quranic teachings. Property becomes theft if the capitalistic

explanation of it is accepted and it is regarded as absolute property, unconditioned by political and social obligations. The use of private property, on the principle that we can do what we like with it, is a robbery of that which rightly and rightfully belongs to God, Society and the State. Greed, the unappeased morbid appetite for enormous heaps of goods ending in satiety of pleasure, as the *summum bonum* of life, is repellent to the humanistic spirit of Islam. On the contrary, man is taught the duty of not only pursuing his personal interests, but also of providing the community, according to his ability, with the wherewithals for the secular and spiritual salvage and salvation of his fellow men. The great emphasis that Islam has laid on the social responsibilities of an owner of wealth, has fascinated Western thinkers, of whom Professor Massignon writes :

"Islam has the merit of standing for a very equalitarian conception of the contribution of each citizen by the tithe to the resources of the community. It is hostile to unrestricted exchange, to banking capital, to state loans, to indirect taxes on articles of prime necessity, but it holds to the right of the father and the husband to the private property and to commercial capital. Here again it occupies an intermediate position between the doctrines of Capitalism and Bolshevist Communism."

In solving the momentous problems which arise from the institution of private property, Islam has also determined the individual's place in society. While allowing him full liberty in the matter of

business and trade, it has clearly defined his obligations to society. The greater his possessions the heavier are his responsibilities to maintain social peace and harmony. The moral restraints imposed on the use of his wealth prevent the owner from behaving like an unchartered libertine. Here again Islam proves superior to Capitalism and Communism, as neither of them has succeeded in harmoniously fitting the individual in a social mosaic. In Capitalism individual liberty deteriorates into licence. A few at the top usurp all for themselves and yoke the rest to the chariot-wheels of their ambitions. The man in the street is treated little better than "a tiny lump of impure carbon and water." In Fascism, which is another name for militant Capitalism, the individual is "liquidated" under the pretext of multiplying the social strength. To the dictator "everyman" is a highly temporary chemical episode on a most petty planet. He is there to be used as cannon-fodder. In Communism also the individual fares no better. He is idealised in the abstract. But in the matter of fact world, he is little short of a pawn on the chess-board. He must dance to the tune of party bosses or he will be "liquidated" in some more painful manner. It is truly said a party member is a marionette. He must steal, spy and sabotage, even betray and let down his dearest and nearest, to carry out the demands and commands of the Party.

Despite their defects and demerits, the exponents of these systems are never tired of blurting out their claims for supremacy and excellence. The Capitalist says, "Keep the system with all its wonderful pano-

rama of inventions and all will be well for humanity." The Marxist revolutionaries cast into his teeth and say :

"Away we'll dash the tyrants' lash
So rouse yourselves, my hearties,
To slay and slash, to smite and smash
Their cursed game of parties
Our hearts, God wot, may well wax hot,
To think how we've been cheated
'Twill be our lot with steel and shot
To see our foes defeated."

Both promise paradise, but lead to perdition, because each stresses one aspect to the detriment of the more vital issues of social life. Both lack a comprehensive grasp of the complicated social phenomenon. Rather than redeem man from his baser self, they intensify it and still expect him to behave altruistically and benevolently. It is tantamount to expecting figs from thistles. A Communist begins his career as a votary of violence and a votary of violence he remains even after he has achieved his object. But Islam reforms man, uproots his evil passions and endows him with a new and nobler *weltanschauung*. Individuals thus formed and fashioned constitute a healthy society free from fissiparous tendencies. Thus there is no social maladjustment, no dictatorship of any class and no class antagonism. There is no opportunist solidarity to fight and rout a common foe. Altruism based on religion is eternal and not vague and intermittent. Privileges and distinctions are not obliterated by violence. But there are adequate safeguards against rich people deterio

rating into "Privileged Class" or "Vested Interests". Social distinctions, if any, arise not from material possessions but from virtue and piety. Such spiritual distinctions as conduce to social welfare are recognised and encouraged. This is why God commands :

"Then strive together (as in a race)
Towards all that is good." (ii : 148)

In a society where rich people vie among themselves to do the greatest good, there can be no class hatred, nor any social disparity issuing in internecine warfare. The poor are also forbidden envy and jealousy or any aggressive designs on the property of the opulent sections. The Holy Quran says :

"And in no wise covet
Those things in which God
Hath bestowed His gifts
More freely on some of you
Than on others." (iv : 32)

As proletarian risings, no matter where they occur, are admittedly the result of the oppression and tyranny of the rich, a great admonition is addressed to the possessing classes. The Holy Quran says :

"For God loveth not
The arrogant, the vainglorious ;—
Nor those who are niggardly
Or enjoin niggardliness,
Or hide the bounties
Which God hath bestowed
On them ; for We have prepared,
For those who resist Faith,
A Punishment that steep
Them in contempt." (iv : 36-37)

5 This is how Islam maintains balance between

the exaggerated 'opposites.' It is opposed equally to the anarchy of the febrile nationalism of the Fascist fashion and the ruthless and remorseless regimentation of the Russian Communism. It is due to its inner spiritual dynamics that it has never succumbed to that obsession with the side of life which is characteristic of the present-day Europe and Russia alike. About Islam's role as a mediator, Mr. Gibb bears a glowing testimony :

"If ever the opposition of the great societies of the East and West is to be replaced by co-operation the mediation of Islam is an indispensable condition." When his pilgrimage on earth was drawing towards the destined end, the Holy Prophet (be peace on him) delivered a resounding sermon from Jabal Arafat to his followers. It epitomises in a simple, succinct and superb narration the social sweep and scope of his teachings. It runs as follows :

"O people, listen to my words with understanding for I know not whether, after this year, I shall ever be among you in this place.

"Your lives and property are sacred and inviolable one to another until you appear before your Lord, even as this day and this month are sacred for all, and remember you will have to appear before your Lord Who will demand from you an account of all your acts.

"The Lord hath prescribed to every man his share of inheritance ; no testament to the prejudice of heirs is lawful.

"The child belongeth to the parent, and the violators of wedlock shall be stoned.

"Whoever falsely claimeth another for his father or his master, the curse of God and of the angels and of all mankind shall be upon him.

"O people, ye have rights over your wives and your wives have rights over you. It is their duty not to break their wifely faith, nor commit any act of manifest indecency. If they do so ye have authority to confine them in separate rooms and to punish them but not severely. But if they refrain, clothe them and feed them properly. Treat your women with loving kindness, for they are with you as prisoners and captives. They have no power over anything that concerneth them. Lo! ye have taken them on the security of Allah and made their persons lawful to you by the words of Allah.

"Be faithful to the trust imposed on you, and shun transgression.

"Usury is forbidden, the debtor shall return only the principal, and the beginning will be made with the loans of my uncle Abbas, son of Abdul Muttalib.

"Henceforth the vengeance for blood practised in the time of ignorance is forbidden and the feud of blood is abolished beginning with the murder of my cousin Rabia ibn Harith ibn Abdul Muttalib.

"And your slaves! See that ye feed them with such food as ye yourselves eat, and clothe them with the stuff ye yourselves wear, and if they commit a fault which ye are not ready to forgive then part with them, for they are servants of your Lord, and

must not be ill-treated. The slaves who say their prayers are your brothers.

"O people ! Listen to my words and understand them. Know that Muslims are brothers one to another ; ye are of one fraternity. Nothing belonging to one of you is lawful to his brother unless given out of free goodwill. Guard yourselves from committing injustice.

"Let him that is present tell it to him who is absent. Happy be he who shall be told, and will remember better than him who hath heard."

At the close of this soul-stirring and life-affirming address, the Holy Prophet paused a while and then exclaimed :

"O Lord, I have delivered my message, and accomplished my work."

The listening multitude cried in chorus : "Aye, that thou hast !"

He said : "O Lord, I beseech Thee, be Thou witness to it."

This thrilling discourse may well be regarded as the Declaration of the Rights of Man. It has all the elements of Social Reconstruction on humane and ethical bases. Unlike the Communist Manifesto it overflows with the milk of human kindness. It does not fulminate against any section or class. It seeks to produce a mild tinge of detachment from "the immediate heats and hurries, the little graces and delights, the tensions and stimulations of the daily world." It gives a bird's-eye view of an ideal sociology embracing in its sweep all human beings

wedded and welded together by the strong ties of mutual obligations. It replaces the atomising process of competition by solidarity, mechanical combination by personal bonds, expropriation of the weak by the strong by the strengthening of the weak and the curbing of the strong and in the place of anarchic individualism the subordination of the individual to the moral conscience of the community.

Islam promotes this basic moral conscience by inculcating fear of God which in practice means scrupulous avoidance of anti-social behaviour in every shape and form. Thus the charter of human brotherhood outlined in the Holy Prophet's Farewell Address is far superior to the one envisaged in the Communist Manifesto. The one leads to no greater triumph for man than that of "eating his fill." The other ensures this as well as guarantees an everlasting felicity, because comfort, competency and equitable sharing of well-being are not enough to satisfy human cravings. In short, Islam goes far beyond both Capitalism and Communism, by regarding man much more than a mere manifestation of the chemical correlations of his endocrine glands. The Bolshevik conception of the social paradise does not go beyond a vast zoological garden where everyone after his conversion to the Bolshevik faith is guaranteed feeding and mating and the sedulously censored spectacle of amusements and entertainments is improvised before the bars of every cage. Islam ensures a consummate paradise without any galling restraints and restrictions. The Holy Book makes a symbolic but unmistakable mention of it in

its reference to the fall of Adam. His new abode is characterised thus :

“There is therein (enough provision)
For thee not to go hungry
Not to go naked.” (xx : 118)

Such is to be the heritage of Adam's progeny and according to the Islamic teachings they must get food, clothes and houses as a matter of right. This right is not circumscribed by any oppressive conditions as are imposed in the Communistic society.

V

BALANCED SOCIETY

No fancied boundaries of mine or thine,
Restrain our wanderings ! Nature gives enough
For all ; but man, with arrogant selfishness
Proud of his heaps, hoards up superfluous stores
Robbed from his weaker fellows, starves the poor,
Or gives to pity what he owes to justice !

—Southey

The present age is an age of strife and confusion, conflicts and cleavages. So much so that it appears as if the earthly planet—the human habitat, has been suddenly wrenched from its orbit by some demoniacal hand and is left spinning wildly in the unknown. This universal chaos manifests itself in the financial bankruptcy of Governments ; the decay of noble traditions ; the corruption of politics, racketeering ; ruthless exploitation in the economic field ; moral depravity in high and low places ; the patent futility of education and the reckless vulgarisation of human values. In short, the atmosphere of modern life is reeking with every kind of contamination and stinks and smells like a stuffy sick-room. Verily, we live in a “Heart-break House”.

The reason for this widespread distress and dislocation is not far to seek. The evidence at hand is overwhelmingly in favour of the thesis that our com-

petitive civilisation is the fertile begetter of this grim malaise and misery. A great thinker writes :

"In an age of social production and mass consumption could any anachronism be more costly than the continued dominance of private property and anti-social ownership? Is it to be wondered at, sociologically, that our civilisation is all mixed and baffled, self-defeating and chaotic, behaving like a blind rat in an intricate maze? Can it be of no importance, psychiatrically as well as socially, that in a period of collectivisation the philosophy of individualism shall still be rampant? Here is the fertile source of social neurosis. . . The quintessence of the situation may be summed up in the assertion that ego-centric motives war against the socialisation and humanisation of life."

It is Capitalism which is responsible for our ills and evils. It emerged from the massacre of the French Revolution with the triple cry of "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity." But as the subsequent events showed, it granted freedom only in the political sense devoid of economic content. In the realm of economics, liberty meant freedom to starve. Lynx-eyed Marx saw through the opaque veil of events and wrote: "Liberty means Infantry, Equality means Cavalry, Fraternity means Artillery." This biting epigram put the true situation in a nutshell and Napoleon's whirlwind military adventures vindicated the truth of this trenchant aphorism. Then followed an era of peace during which Capitalism worked wonders and harnessed Nature to the service of man. It is a 'purple patch' in the otherwise blood-curdling story of bourgeoisie domination. Even

Marx and Engels have paid floral tributes to the capitalist achievements. In their famous *Communist Manifesto* they write :

"The bourgeoisie, during its rule of scarce one hundred years, has created more massive and more colossal productive forces than have all preceding generations together. Subjection of Nature's forces to man, mechanical application of chemistry to industry and agriculture, steam-navigation, railways, electric telegraphs, cleaning of whole continents for cultivation, canalisation of rivers, while populations conjured out of the ground what earlier century had even a presentiment that such productive forces slumbered in the lap of social labour."

But behind this fascinating facade, barbarism of the worst type was in full blast. The system inaugurated by the French Revolution slowly and steadily but surely crystallised into a grasping, acquisitive and competitive economy in which man paid homage to "Almighty Money". The promise of equality was a mere pleasing myth. Equality could never flourish in a system which preached the formula: "Everybody for himself and Devil take the hindmost." It may well be regarded as a monstrous printer's error in the record of history. Inhuman maldistribution of wealth has been awfully in evidence. It has been worsened by the taxes and levies which have descended most heavily on the lowest income groups—the rich managing to dodge and evade them by some subterfuge or another. Bernard Shaw has described in his own peculiar fashion the phenomenon of unequal income by remarking that

that at one end of the town there are dinners without appetites and at the other end appetites without dinners.

This tragic lack of equality manifests itself in the three fundamental economic relations of modern life: in unequal bargaining power between the employer and the employee; in unequal competitive power between the individual *entrepreneur* and the large corporation; in unequal bargaining power between the consumer and the producer. The result of all this is that those who are gainers under the bourgeoisie rule are obstinate obscurantists and concentrate their energies on perpetuating the *status quo*, and make a dead set to resist the revaluation of values. Life continues to crawl on a low level with money as its *summum bonum*. Max Lerner gives a graphic description of the market economy in the capitalistic era. He says:

"The emphasis upon marketing rather than production, and the dizzy piling up of a credit structure, both of them characteristic of the latest stage in Capitalism have combined with the drive towards speculation to produce a heaven unknown to the theologies of the past. Promotion is its faith, merchandising its gospel, profits its salvation, dividends its dogma, and its *Nirvana* an ultimate and beatific leisure."

Quite obviously, this is only make-believe welfare. It may deceive some people for some time but cannot deceive all the people all the time. When the social hierarchy lives on the scantily-rewarded labour of the proletariat, when the government is of the

rich people by rich people and for the rich people, wealth does not mean social welfare or well-being but is a disconcerting symbol of economic aggression and appalling pauperisation. Such a social structure as this stands on quicksands. The internal strains and stresses are bound to undermine it and hasten its collapse. An apt picture of the slow corrosive process is given by Max Lerner who says:

"A society may seem to be carrying on its normal life, maintaining an outward political order, producing works of art and thought, cultivating the amenities and the luxuries of a brilliant consumers' civilisation. But if it does not have valid inner sources of strength, it is at best but a loose and flabby structure, ready to collapse at the first deep thrust—a sort of Persian Empire to go down before an Alexander. The ultimate fate may be postponed—again and again postponed—when some means is found of sublimating or diverting the mounting dissatisfactions. Lavish public display, the madness of military victory, waves of religious fervour, interest in sports and amusements, new inventions and comforts to dazzle by a sense of well-being—all these have at one time or another been found effective. But in the realm of what Edward Sapir has called the "Social Unconscious" the strains continue to leave their impress. It is in this realm that the effective part of the social process transpires. Out of this sub-soil the significant despairs and defeats emerge that will allow ultimately of no denial."

The first gigantic upshot of economic encroachments and social disillusionments was World War I. Capitalism pulled through this agony but emerged

as a cripple. World War II which has raged in all its hurricane fury is already proving its swan-song.

The greatest menace to its existence arose immediately after World War I. It was Communism. It entrenched itself in Russia and since then has been keeping the capitalists on tenter-hooks of anxiety. Communism with a high-developed *cultus* of its own has an emotional appeal to the hungry masses who have been impoverished by Capitalism, and to make matters worse, have also been let down by pseudo-religion. Christopher Dawson in his book *Religion and the Modern State* writes: "The fact is that the bourgeoisie culture of the modern Capitalist State fails to satisfy the deepest need of the human spirit, so that the hungry and the dissatisfied turn for relief even to the dry husks of Communism." The same writer in his *Enquiries into Religion and Culture* develops the same point at some length. He says:

"Man cannot live in a spiritual void; he needs some fixed social standards and some absolute intellectual principles. Bolshevism at least replaces the spiritual anarchy of bourgeoisie society by a rigid order and substitutes for the doubt and scepticism of an irresponsible intelligentsia the certitude of an absolute authority embodied in social institutions. It is true that the Bolshevik philosophy is a poor thing at best. It is philosophy reduced to its very lowest terms, a philosophy with a minimum of spiritual and intellectual content. It impoverishes life instead of enriching it, and confines the mind in a narrow and avid circle of ideas. Nevertheless, it is enough of a philosophy to provide society with a theoretical basis and therein lies the secret of

its strength. The lesson of Bolshevism is that any philosophy is better than no philosophy; and that a regime which possesses a principle of authority, however misconceived it may be, will be stronger than a system that rests on the shifting basis of private interests and private opinions."

Communism came to instal itself as a philosophy because religion in the real sense of the term had retreated and receded into the background. Faith in God, the Creator of the heavens and earth, the Creator and Nourisher of man, the Lord and Giver of Life had died out. Communism even in its highly idealised and idolised form cannot fill this ominous void caused by the decay of religion. It is like building a new world in the dark. With the restoration of spiritual values, intelligent folk will take stock of things and their verdict on Communism will be as adverse as it is about the moribund Capitalism. They will say that the intellectual trio of Marx-Engels-Lenin built "a house which is not a palace but a prison as it has no windows. What man fervently looks forward to is the coming of a day-spring from on high to give light to them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

With all its glaring and gaping inadequacies and its inherent contradictions, Communism is a movement of supreme historic significance. It is the manifestation of "the menace of under-man." It has not been collared by Christianity because Christianity itself was caught napping. By the ecstatic exalta-

tion of poverty and want as pointers to paradise the Christian evangelists laid flattering unction to their soul and thought that they had taken all fight out of "under-man". But it was a wishful thinking and an awkward retreat before grim realities. Islam abhors such escapism as it has all the requisite potentialities to try conclusions with Communism. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) foresaw the catastrophic rising of the workers of the world and forearmed his creed against it. He said :

لا تقوم الساعة حتى يظهر التحوت وتهلك الوعول

"Resurrection will not come until the proletariat rise in revolt and snatch the seats of government."

He also foretold the ascendancy of Capitalism which the world is witnessing today. Once some people brought a little quantity of silver to the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of God be upon him) and told him that it had been quarried from their mine. At this the Holy Prophet (be peace on him) said that the time was not far-off when mischievous people would obtain control of mines. The control of mines is symbolic of the capitalistic exploitation of the underground wealth.

There is a similar prediction about the widespread vogue of usury which has nurtured and nourished the monster of Capitalism. The Holy Prophet (be peace on him) said : "An epoch will dawn on the world when there will not be a single person who will not swallow *riba* (usury) and if there is any one who refrains from it, its (usury) fumes (or dust) will reach him."

Even in the Holy Quran there is nothing but condemnation of capitalists and their end is predicted in the parable of *Qaroon* who was a great capitalist of his time and came to grief for his devouring greed and callous aggrandisement. The same grievous end awaits his progeny of today. The Holy Quran says :

"Qaroon was, doubtless,
Of the people of Moses ; but
He acted insolently towards them :

Such were the treasures We
Had bestowed on him, that
Their very keys would
Have been a burden to
A body of strong men.

Behold, his people said to him :

"Exult not, for God loveth not
Those who exult (in riches).

"But seek, with the (wealth)
Which God has bestowed on thee,
The Home of the Hereafter,
Nor forget thy portion in this
World : but do thou good :
As God has been good.

To thee, and seek not
(Occasions for) mischief in the land :
For God loves not those
Who do mischief.

"He said : "This has been given
To me because of a certain
Knowledge which I have.
Did he not know that God
Had destroyed, before him,
(Whole) generations,—which were
Superior to him in strength

And greater in the amount
(Of riches) they had collected?
But the wicked are not
Called (immediately) to account
For their sins." (xxviii: 76, 77, 78)

The foregoing verses depict the voracious and rapacious mentality of the capitalists and an overweening pride in their business acumen and an uncanny genius for amassing wealth. These verses also mirror forth the tragic end of the accumulation of unsocial wealth. In the past, capitalists were overtaken by divine punishment for their ruthless and remorseless exploitation of human beings. Qaroon also came to an ignominious end as the Holy Quran says:

"Then We caused the earth
To swallow up him and
His house; and he had not
(The least little) party
To help him against God,
Nor could he defend himself." (xxviii: 81)

It may well be taken as a prophecy of the sore distress of the capitalist countries which in World War II have been almost decimated by the deluge of steel and flame from above and from below.

Thus Islam foresaw both the rise of Capitalism to the dizzy heights of power and glory and the uprising of the economically-disinherited people against the exploiters and usurpers. It also foreshadowed the destruction of society which battered on the fat of the poor. This is why we can hopefully turn to the Quranic teachings in our task to iron out social

wrinkles and sand-paper the knobs and knots in the economic system.

The first effective endeavour of Islam to establish social equilibrium is its emphasis on equality. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) said:

"All men are equal in their human rights."

Hazrat Abu Bakr adhered to the principle of equality in the distribution of wealth and did not pay heed to the special merits of men. Once during his caliphate, he received huge wealth and distributed it equally among the deserving people. At this, some men suggested to him that he should have first taken into account the comparative spiritual merits of the recipients and should thereafter have fixed their share in the common pool. The talented Caliph rose to the occasion and told the dissentients that he was not unconscious of the widely differing merits and excellences of the people. Rather he knew and appreciated them more than anybody else. But spiritual superiority was a quality which would be duly rewarded by the Almighty. In matters pertaining to livelihood, there could be no preferential treatment.

Hazrat Umar at first departed from this course and in the early years of his caliphate he favoured the Badr-warriors vis-a-vis those who did not enjoy this distinction. Consequently, the distribution of stipends and largesses was uneven. But endowed with rare insight as he was, he soon realised that his predecessor's policy was sounder

than his own. He, therefore, ruled out all distinctions and discriminations in the distribution of the means of living. Hazrat Ali also followed this practice.

But as human beings are gifted with varying talents, it is inevitable that some differences in their social status should arise. There are bound to be rich and poor. But in the absence of some salutary restraint there is bound to be an ever-widening gulf between them. Unless some checks and balances are devised, these differences in worldly living might prove disruptive. Islam does not ignore this phenomenon. It does not, as Marxists would elect to do, unmask its batteries against the rich folk nor does it breathe brimstone and fire against riches and possessions as such. To use Ruskin's terms, it abhors "Wealth Reflective" which accumulates in hoards, but approves of "Wealth Radiant" which radiates and flows to places where it is most needed. Thus the bias of the Islamic teachings is towards the dispersal of wealth. The Holy Qur'an says :

"God has bestowed His gifts
Of sustenance more freely on some
Of you than on others : those
More favoured are not going
To throw back their gifts
To those whom their right hands
Possess, so as to be equal
In that respect. Will they then
Deny the favours of God." (xvi : 17)

In this verse economic superiority of one person over another is regarded as immanent in the very

scheme of things. But it becomes obnoxious and destructive of the rhythm of harmonious social life, if the upper classes do not part with their unwanted surplus to relieve the dire distress of their destitute brethren who have lagged behind on account of some physical and intellectual handicaps. In the verse quoted above the expression *so as to be equal* is very significant. It means exactly *the same things* as was made out by Allamah Zamakhshari in his *Kashshaf* (کشاف). His actual words are :

"They (the poor people) are men like you. They are your brethren. Therefore it is proper for those who are endowed with better opportunities of earning their livelihood that they should part with a share of their income in order that there should be equality in the enjoyment of creature comforts."

The Holy Prophet summed up the obligations of the rich to the poor in a highly expressive sentence :

"If any Muslim has his brother holding a position inferior to him, he should let him partake of what he eats and what he wears."
(Bukhari)

This acts as a throttle-grip on the capitalists who would otherwise suck the very life-blood of the poor. Riches in Islam carry a heavy social responsibility. Unless the rich discharge it wisely and well they forfeit their right to their possessions.

In a capitalists civilisation, gold and other precious metals are the most popular forms of wealth. Gold-fetishism, we all know, has vitiated the

whole economic structure. After World War I, all the nations became afflicted with gold-lust. America and France piled up a huge store of the yellow metal. Other countries followed suit. This feverish, frantic hunt for gold had a boomerang effect. The trade curves flattened, sagged and dropped. Economic depression in all its disastrous manifestations descended like the Crack of Doom and touched the nadir-point in 1929. Finding their systems threatened with trade slump, all Western countries abandoned the Gold Standard and the much-adored metal went out of circulation to lick dust in the gloomy vaults of the banks. The world has not yet given up its irrational worship of a metal which is worse than worthless if it is divorced from human needs. God—the All-knowing warned the world against the dire consequences of the insane pursuit of gold and silver. In the Holy Book He says :

“And there are those
Who bury gold and silver
And spend it not in the Way
Of God : announce unto them
A more grievous penalty.” (ix : 34)

From this verse it is clear that God enjoins the wealthy to keep wealth in a state of circulation. Islam views with extreme disfavour the monopoly of resources by a few self-seeking millionaires. The Holy Quran says :

“In order that it (wealth) may not
(Merely) make a circuit
Between the wealthy among you.” (lix : 7)

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) commends and commands socially beneficial expenditure :

“Riches should be taken from the rich and returned to the poor.” (Bukhari)

There is a grievous punishment in store for those who abuse their riches to the detriment of society. God commands :

“(The stern command will say) :

Seize ye him,
And bind ye him

“And burn ye him
In the Blazing Fire.

“Further, make him march
In a chain, whereof
The length is seventy cubits.” (lxix : 30-32)

Islam as the above-quoted verses prove to the hilt is all for the equitable distribution of wealth and does not countenance idle hoards of the Napoleons of Finance and others of their ilk who profiteer at the cost of others. But unlike Communism it does not hold rich men under a sentence of death. It permits the holding of what is known as *Functional Property* and encourages the productive and beneficial use of capital. The *motif* of the Islamic teachings in regard to economic system is that they seek to discourage hoarding and stimulate spending, because wealth whether in the hands of one or a few men has a social destiny. The Holy Book says :

“Speak to My servants
Who have believed,
That they may establish

Regular prayers and spend
(In charity) out of the Sustenance
We have given them,
Secretly and openly, before
The Coming of a Day
In which there will be
Neither mutual bargaining
Nor befriending." (xiv : 31)

"And spend (in charity)
Out of what We have provided
For them, secretly and openly
Hope for commerce
That will never fail." (xxxv : 29)

It is obvious that the stress is on socially beneficial spending only. Lest it should be misinterpreted, God warns against ostentatious extravagance and reckless spending. He commands :

"But waste not
By excess for God loveth not wasters." (vi : 142)

"Verily spend-thrifts are brothers
Of the Evil Ones ;
And the Evil One
Is to this Lord (Himself)
Ungrateful." (xvii : 27)

In the capitalistic society, big industrial magnates exhibit a damnable stinginess in remunerating their employees. They are all the time devising schemes of amassing wealth and minimising its expenditure. But on occasions which have little or no social significance, they squander their riches in a haphazard manner. This conspicuous waste of wealth arises from a false sense of prestige and dignity. As such this is the abuse of God-given riches. It,

therefore, excites divine wrath. The Holy Quran says :

"God sets forth a Parable :
A city enjoying security
And quiet, abundantly supplied
With sustenance from every place :
Yet was it ungrateful
For the favours of God :
So God made it taste
Of hunger and terror in extremes
(Closing in on it) like a garment
(From every side), because
Of the (evil) which
(Its people) wrought." (xvi : 112)

Before World War II began, Western nations were spending astronomical sums on armaments to the utter neglect of the starving masses. In the ambitious programmes for economic autarky, munition factories figured prominently. Trade embargoes were designed to strangle and stifle the backward nations. Intoxicated with a sense of economic supremacy, they failed to realise that their ill-conceived programmes were leading them to a devastating war. But God's commands are inexorable. Their defiance brought death and destruction on the West. Cities humming with industries and overflowing with wealth have been turned into howling wildernesses. According to a divine law, a community or a country exists or possesses a right to exist as long as it has some saving grace. The rich may well be salt of the earth if they subordinate their activities to the commands of God. But they become the veriest vermins if they disobey them and take to exploitation and

aggrandisement. Not only do they alone go to rack and ruin, for their ungodly ways, but like the blind Samson of old bring down with them the whole structure of society. No trick of artifice can avert the calamity nor even their eleventh-hour prayers can avail them against the scorching wrath of God.

"Seest thou one
Who denies the Judgment
(To come)?"

"Then such is the (man)
Who repulses the orphan
(With harshness),

"And encourages not
The feeding of the indigent

"So woe to the worshippers
Who are neglectful
Of their Prayers,
Those who (want but)
To be seen (of men),
But refuse (to supply)
(Even) neighbourly needs." (cvii : 127)

In this small Chapter, God declares such prayers nugatory as fail to fill one's mind with the milk of human kindness. If a rich man sits tight over his hoards and his fists close and clench at the sight of the needy and the indigent, he is a rebel against the divine scheme of things. Islam does not ban private wealth but subjects it to social welfare and seeks to kill avarice, covetousness and hardness of heart towards others. In Islam superiority comes from moral virtues and not from property and possessions. Hence there is the distinction of "The Elect" and

"The Reprobate" but no barbarous bifurcation of "The Haves" and "The Have-nots". The Holy Quran puts an end to the class-war which now rages in the heart of the capitalist society. It says :

"O mankind ! We created
You from a single (pair)
Of a male and a female,
And made you into
Nations, that
Ye may know each other
(Not that you may despise
Each other). Verily
The most honoured of you
In the Sight of God
Is (he who is) the most
Righteous of you." (xlix : 13)

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) said : "God has commanded me to show humility so that no one may rise above one another, or behave haughtily towards others."

Again he says : "Verily God has now taken away from you the arrogance of the days of ignorance and the conceit of (superior) ancestry"—(*Abu Daud*). Such salutary teachings are bound to create a healthy frame of mind, and vanity and aggression begin to look repulsive. A rich man born and bred under such a spiritual discipline ordained by Islam can never become rapacious in his economic pursuits or aggressive in his social relations. There can be no more sublime and more heart-lifting example of social equality than that suggested by the incident of King Jabala. He was a new convert to Islam and was once performing the sacred circumambulations round the

Holy Kabah. He beat a Muslim who, in his circumambulation, happened to tread on his skirt. The victim of his high-handedness carried his complaint to the court of Hazrat Umar. The Pious Caliph who never relented or prevaricated in the enforcement of the Quranic teachings, at once summoned the erring chief to his court. When he was convinced of the chief's guilt, he decided that the complainant should retaliate in accordance with the Islamic Law of *Qisas* (retaliation). The man in the dock implored for the postponement of the execution of the decision as a measure of mercy. This request was granted. He availed himself of this temporary respite and made good his escape and turned apostate. A Pious Caliph would sooner lose a man, be he so great, than brook the breach of the Quranic commandment of human equality in day-to-day life.

In capitalistic societies, money determines one's place in the social sphere. This, we have seen, is repugnant to the spirit of Islam. Race and colour are no small factors in modern societies. Nazism set a great store by blood and aimed at establishing Pan-Germanic supremacy under the pretext of the Aryans' inherent right to rule. Fascism, on the other hand, was a creed of febrile and aggressive nationalism. They both wanted to raise one race or nation over others and ultimately came to a sticky end. Islam does not countenance race-arrogance or colour-conceit. The Holy Book says :

"And swell not thy cheek
(For pride) at men,
Nor walk in insolence

Through the earth ;
For God loveth not
Any arrogant boaster." (xxxix : 18)

This embodies the principle of human equality and denounces *hauteur* and scorns glories of caste, colour and class.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) once said : "Thou art not good Abu Dharr because of the red or black complexion, but thou art more worthy because of thy good acts (Abu Dharr in *Imam Hambal*). And again :

"Verily God looks not to your fingers nor bodies, but He looks into your hearts and bodies."—Abu Huraira.

This sublime aspect of the Islamic teachings has evoked glowing tributes even from the enemies of Islam. Dr Dhalla in his book *Our Perfecting World* says :

"Muhammadanism alone among the religions of the world has remained free from the colour bias. . . . It welcomes all converts with open arms, whether they be negroes or pariahs. Without reserve it accords them their rights and privileges and receives them into its social circle as much as into its religion. It excludes all barriers of birth and colour and admits its converts within the community on the basis of complete social equality." Dr. Dennison Ross says : "It was among the Arabs that the man was born who was to unite the whole known world of East and West." In his book, *Authors of History*, H.G. Wells writes : "The stress Islam lays on

equality of all men without any distinction of creed and class and the practical domestic brotherhood of Muslims, has made the faith one of the greatest forces of the civilised world today."

By laying special stress on merit and virtue to the entire exclusion of all other conventional labels and badges of distinction, Islam has created what may in modern phraseology be termed as "Balanced Society" or *أمة وسطى* (Intermediate Community) as the Holy Quran calls it. It did not merely emphasise social equality, but also disallowed all such attitudes and activities as are likely to disrupt social harmony in the long run.

It is now a broad fact of history that the morbid development of the capitalistic civilisation is mainly due to the institution of Usury. It is this which gave the post-feudal economy the repulsive and opprobrious epithet of Capitalism. In economics it is known as 'Unearned Income.' In the absence of the prohibition of Usury, a wealthy man can devise a hundred and one methods of augmenting his possessions, which undermine his morals and afflict him with an insatiable lust for more and more. This is why Islam has been deadly against all kinds of Usury. It forbids it thus :

"O ye who believe !

Devour not Usury,

Doubled and multiplied

But fear God ; that

Ye may (really) prosper." (iii : 129)

Allah has allowed trading and forbidden Usury (*riba*). This verse falsifies the much-paraded notion

that Usury is the life-blood of business and trading and that its abolition will prove disastrous to industrial and commercial activities. Allah—the All-knowing, forbade Usury because it promoted economic aggression and enriched the lenders at the cost of the borrowers and split up the society into "Top-dogs" and "Under-dogs." A faith which seeks to foster human brotherhood could not permit this inhuman institution. There is no sympathy in lending money to a man in distress at exorbitant rates of interest. Even what is commonly termed as a reasonable rate implies exploitation of a borrower's distress. This is why the Holy Book has severely condemned all usurious dealings. It says :

"Those who devour Usury

Will not stand except

As stands one whom

The Evil one by his touch

Hath driven to madness.

That is because they say :

"Trade is like Usury."

But God hath permitted trade

And forbidden Usury." (ii : 275)

"God will deprive

Usury of all blessing,

But will give increase

For deeds of charity :

For He loveth not

Creatures ungrateful

And wicked." (ii : 276)

"Oh ye who believe !

"Fear God, and give up

What remains of your demand

For Usury, if ye are
Indeed believers.

"If ye do it not,
Take notice of war
From God and His Apostle :
But if ye turn back,
Ye shall have
Your capital sums :
Deal not unjustly
And ye shall not
Be dealt with unjustly." (ii : 278-79)

The Traditions abound with the ringing denunciation of Usury. Abu Dharr Ghifari carried on a relentless campaign against usurious accumulations of money. Capitalists in the past as in the present age, hoarded money because it gave them an economic ascendancy over their poor brethren. Abu Dharr—the hot-gospeller of social equality—was never tired of assailing the unIslamic practice of lending money, and thus holding the borrowers and debtors in fee. As he did not heed any warning, Amir Muawiyah wanted to pacify him by a gift of huge money. This was an acid-test of his convictions. He stood it admirably well. He distributed all he had received in the form of gifts.

Usury is not only anti-social, but an extremely wretched institution, because it is a naked exploitation of a brother's need. Today we find how a creditor nation holds a debtor nation in bondage through usurious loans. We also know too well that such international debts breed bitterness and estrangement. This is why it is laid down in the Holy Quran :

"God will deprive
Usury of all blessing
But will give increase
For deeds of charity." (ii : 276)

The huge loan negotiated between the U. S. A. and U. K. under the Bretton-Woods Agreement embittered mutual relations of these two Allies. The blazing kernel of this bitterness is the interest charged by the creditor. Even the late Lord Keynes, the author of this Agreement on behalf of England, in the course of his speech in the House of Lords, observed that all his life he would regret that the U. S. A. did not see her way to grant an interest-free loan to his country. The late Sir Churchill who was notorious for his love of America, was astonished that the United States should think worth her while to demand an equivalent of 1.62 per cent interest from her debtor in the special circumstances in which Britain found herself. He visualised the serious dangers that lurked behind this money-lender's deal and remarked, "Whatever may be said to the contrary our relations (with the U. S. A.) have deteriorated." It was to obviate the moral and material horrors of usurious loans that Islam prohibited interest. Never was the wisdom of this prohibition so loudly vindicated as in the Parliament of England when the Bretton-Woods Bill was under fire. Islam always desired loans to be in the nature of grants-in-aid and not commercial transactions. This is exactly the point made out against the American loans which are correctly styled as "niggardly, barbaric, antediluvian settlement" on account of the creditor's insistence on

charging interest. A borrower has to bend before "Uncle Shylock" because there is no way out of the economic impasse. Dr. Hugh Dalton, Chancellor of the Exchequer (1945) who stood to defend the deal in the House of Commons, could not conceal his mortification at the capitalistic greed of Britain's comrade-in-arms in the global war. He said, "This great load of debt which we bring out of the war is a strange reward for all that we in this land suffered for the common cause. It is a strange ironical reward on which historians will make comment. . . . We first asked for a grant-in-aid or a loan free of interest and were told that this was not practical politics." England which could not see anything objectionable in charging interest in individual lendings and borrowings, suddenly awakened to its disastrous effects in an international deal. It is because the West recognises the awkward distinction between private and public morality. But Islam which is as good a guide in private as in public affairs, forbade interest equally strongly in individual as well as in national, even international transactions, because it was equally injurious in all spheres.

Jabir relates that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) strongly denounced the "recipient" of Usury, the "giver" of it, and also the one who drafted the documents relating to usurious loans.

Before the decline of Capitalism and its gloomy and ghastly aftermath, "Usury" was believed to be the keystone of the arch of economic prosperity. In

ill-informed circles, Islam was dubbed as primitive for prohibiting it and thus denying its followers a scope for economic prosperity. The industrial backwardness of the Muslim States was invariably attributed to this lacuna in the sociology of Islam. But the puny and sickly logic of man could not outrival the divine code of the Quran in tackling the socio-economic problems. A man truly conversant with the teachings of the Holy Quran could not be deluded by the vast riches and the economic domination of the West, because all this could not conceal the poverty and penury of the teeming masses. The colonial imperialism further emphasised the rotten hollowness of the European civilisation. Islam which tames the impulse of greed, could not for the world tolerate a practice which was to enrich a few rich at the cost of starving millions. Some people have tried to distinguish between "Interest" and "Usury" and have commended "Interest" as a legitimate charge for the use of one's savings which embody years of self-denial. This is a mere quibble. Name it how one may, it is as anti-social as ever. The Arabic equivalent of Usury is *riba* which means excess over the sum lent. Whether interest is charged to cover the risks involved in lending or to reward the denial of the use of one's money for some period, it is forbidden. No euphemism can save it from the condemnation of Islam. A Tradition relates that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) said that a loan which brings in profit, falls under the category of *riba*—Usury. (*Baihaqi*, Vol. V) This decides the whole issue and demolishes all pleas

for the retention of "interest" in some form or another.

Islam has prohibited all activities which encroach on the livelihood of others. The Holy Book says: "O ye who believe! Eat not up your property among yourselves in vanities: But let there be amongst you traffic and trade by mutual consent." (iv: 29)

Some time an unscrupulous person starts litigation to deprive another person of his property. This is also held unlawful, wherefore it is said: "And do not eat up your property among yourselves for vanities, nor use it as bait for the judges, with intent that ye may eat up wrongfully, and knowingly." (ii: 188)

Gambling and speculation are also disallowed because they are fraught with dangerous possibilities. Allah says: "They ask thee concerning wine and gambling; say, in them is great sin and some profit for men and their sin is greater than the profit." (ii: 219)

"Satan's plan is (but) to excite enmity and hatred between you, with intoxicants and gambling." (v: 94)

These pithy verses cover lotteries and similar other get-rich-quick devices which have sprung up in our own times. It is obvious that they do not add one iota to national wealth. As short-cuts to wealth, they induce sloth and indolence and discount honest labour. Islam puts premium on honest work, and has, therefore, prohibited all pursuits of the nature of speculations and lottery. On the contrary, it has laid

great stress on honest earnings and has associated great dignity with labour. The Holy Quran says: "How excellent a recompense for those who work (and strive)." (iii: 136) In fact the Holy Book lays down that man is born to work. It says, "That man can have nothing, but what he strives for." (lii: 39) "God hath granted a grade higher to those who strive and fight in the cause of God than to those who sit (at home)." (iv: 95)

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was commanded to proclaim: "Say, O my people, do whatever ye can: I will do (my part): But soon will ye know." (xxxix: 39)

Miqdam relates that the Holy Prophet said, "Never has any one eaten a better thing than when he eats of the work of his own hands." (*Bukhari*) Again in another authentic work as *Tirmizi*, we read, "A Muslim dies with sweat on his brow." In the Holy Book, Allah says, "Never will I suffer to be lost the work of any of you, be he male or female, the one of you being from the other." (iii: 195)

When we talk of Capitalism, we usually have in view the activities of the industrial magnates and the appalling conditions that prevail in urban areas. In cities, no doubt, social discord and disharmony are seen in their stark nakedness. But in villages also an equally awful state of affairs is much in evidence. Here the landlord rules the roost. His tenants toil and moil, day and night and get hardly enough to keep their body and soul together. All the evils of serfdom and helotry obtain in villages. This agrarian capital-

ism is founded on the wrong notion that land belongs to the king who conquers it. But Islam does not approve of it. Hence it forestalls feudalism. According to its teachings, land belongs to God who created it for the good of the people at large. This is borne out by the Quranic verses (له الملك) *i.e.* "To him belongs Dominion," (lxiv: 1), and (والارض وضعها للانام), *i.e.* "It is He Who has spread out the earth for (His) creatures." (lxiv: 10).

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) said: "All land is of God, the creatures are the creatures of God, whoso quickens dead land is best entitled to it." (*Abu Daud*). Two similar sayings of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) are as follows:

- (a) Whoso quickens a dead land is its real owner. He cannot be evicted.
- (b) Whoso cultivates and inhabits a land which its owner is not able to do and has left it go waste, shall have it. (Quoted from *Pan-islamism and Bolshevism* by Mushir Hussain Qidwai)

In the light of these sayings, it is clear that the ownership of land is permissible only under some stringent conditions which prevent it from developing into landlordism. An owner of a tract of land is supposed to cultivate it himself. In case he does not do it, he may pass the right of cultivation to his Muslim brother without the obligation of paying any rent. The leasing of land on contract or *Batai* (division of crops between the tenant and the landlord)

basis according to some Traditionists is forbidden in Islam. Hazrat Abu Dharr Ghiffari was an enthusiastic exponent of this idea. *Muslim* and *Bukhari* record the Holy Prophet's sayings to this effect. Hazrat Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet said: "He who owns land should cultivate it himself or let his Muslim brother cultivate it gratis as a favour. If he is not willing to do either, he should let it lie uncultivated—(*Muslim*). Hazrat Jabir says that the Holy Prophet forbade any profit from land under *Batai* or contract—(*Muslim*).

There are, no doubt, other sayings related from the Holy Prophet (be peace on him) under which the leasing of land on *Batai* and contract is regarded permissible. But even in that case the tenant is granted a privileged status. The co-sharing between the owner and the tenant is done on an equitable basis. Rack-renting and summary eviction are severely forbidden. There is a saying of the Holy Prophet (be peace on him) recorded in *Muslim*, *Abu Daud*, *Nisai* and *Tirmizi* according to which the Holy Prophet (be peace on him) did not forbid tenancy, but exhorted that the mutual dealings should be conducted with courtesy and leniency and that the huckstering spirit should be eschewed.

Apparently there are two schools of thought on this point—the Radicals and the Moderates, but both of them leave little room for landlordism. The odds are in favour of those who hold that the owner must cultivate the land himself. The very spirit of Islam is against living by owning and without working. Such ownership is a perfect sinecure, for the only function

it involves is that of collecting rents. This amounts to taxing other people's labour. The validity of the attitude of Islam against such sinecurist living is vindicated by a renowned English economist Mill who wrote in 1848: "The reasons which form the justification of property in land are valid only in so far as the proprietor of land is its improver. . . . In no sound theory of private property was it ever contemplated that the proprietor of land should be merely a sinecurist quartered in it."

Islam extirpates Capitalism as well as landlordism and calls into being a society based on equality and liberty in the most natural sense of the words—a society from which class conflicts disappear and which realises the truest and sincerest human solidarity. This social order is shaped not by the sickly reason of a fallible man but by the *shariah*—the divine philosophy of the Holy Quran.

VI

ECONOMICS AND RELIGION

By living according to the rules of religion a man becomes the wisest, the best and the happiest creature that he is capable of being—honesty, industry, the employing of time well, a constant sobriety, an undefiled purity, with continual serenity, are the best preservatives, too, of life and health.

—Burnet

'Tis religion which can give
Sweetest pleasures while we live ;
'Tis religion must supply
Solid comforts when we die.

Those who believe in a cloistered virtue, world renunciation and monastic life, fail to see any harmony between economics and religion. Their conscience revolts against any attempt at the synthesis of these two sciences—secular and spiritual. I call religion a spiritual science, because it lays down laws for the welfare of the soul as economics does for the body. One is the bread of spiritual guidance while the other is the hard stone of intellectual curiosity. Those who ignore it, starve their souls and retard their spiritual progress and deprive themselves of divine bliss and grace.

It is a common fallacy that economics outrages religious sanctities and stifles all longings for communion with the Creator : and that religion fulfils its purpose only when it launches a great offensive against economics and wipes out all traces of it. Those who labour under this pathetic delusion—and they are not few, say, if not in so many words, at least emphasise by their conduct that the world was created to be renounced. God made the physical Universe and commanded His creatures to seek His pleasure by discarding it. This inverted logic leads us to no other conclusion but that God's act of creation was absurdity itself. A "religion" which teaches this glorious nonsense does itself no credit. It succeeds only in drowning its followers in the Slough of Despond. It regards all progress and advancement in the material world as Moloch's mutiny against the might of God. If we pursue this point of view to its logical sequel we shall have to admit that the divine purpose has been an all-round frustration.

The credit of propagating this fallacious belief goes to Buddhism and Christianity. Had these creeds continued to enjoy their pristine vigour the world would have been turned into caves and catacombs inhabited by half-starved monks and ash-bespattered ascetics. Baron von Hugel says that the utter pessimism of this ascetic religion (Buddhism) is due to its refusal to see any value or reality behind the ceaseless flux of phenomena. An unreal earth means an unreal heaven. Between the infra-real visible world, which the Buddhists describe by the words *Maya* and *Samsara*, and the shoreless ocean of *Nir-*

vana, all life, colour and meaning seem to have vanished. This delusion does possess one's mind when one allows one's thoughts of the other world to suck all the meaning out of this. The other world will also become empty of content. This method of abstraction is like peeling an onion. The result is extreme impoverishment of life. Price must be paid for this 'specialisation' in holiness. Japan and Europe which for long lay under the incubus of these crippling creeds rose into mentionable prominence only by completely overthrowing them and disabusing their minds of the mediaeval obsessions. It is a great historic fact which needs no telling.

This lop-sided view of life was bound to provoke serious reactions in the human mind. No sooner did man receive greater intelligence and outgrew old savage prejudices than there occurred a stampede from Christianity on a large scale. The primitive belief of seeking salvation in self renunciation and supreme hatred of the world around, was cast away like a threadbare coat. Religion in the sense of world renunciation began to be decried as a drag on the wheel of human progress. The priest-class which had for centuries enjoyed unquestioned supremacy, fell on evil days. Its stock in-trade, self-renunciation and self-mortification, slumped heavily. Its followers took to material pursuits with a vengeance. Religion began to be regarded as an "opium of life." Atheism and agnosticism were let loose upon the world which was chafing under the crushing load of Christian dogma. Religion came to be reckoned as an ancient institution fit only for barbarians in order to curb their

savage tendencies. Irreligion, in short, became "all the go."

But the new materialistic conception of life is not less lop-sided hence not less injurious than the ancient creed of self-renunciation. It seeks to spread and deepen the material leaven. It caters for the needs of the mortal "self" at the cost of soul, which is the eternal "self" of man and which goes on evolving even after we have run our course on earth. I do not like to embark upon the delicate discussion of soul and matter but I must say that even the champions of materialism and the arch-rebels against religion cannot afford to deny that there is something as soul and that it is some ethereal energy which propels our body. It is not governed by physical laws. It has its own needs and wants. It is also hungry and thirsty and appeases its appetite and quenches its thirst by ambrosia and nectar from on High.

If the propelling force—the soul, is not properly looked after, the whole machine will go out of gear. Europe, the stronghold of materialism, was caught in the toils of a stupendous calamity which turned this continent of "culture and civilisation" into a debris of smoking ruins. World War II raged like a devastating epidemic. The recorded war-time speeches of the leaders of Europe were virtually the funeral orations of their much-vaunted civilisation which is an uncongenial triplet of: Christian Dogma, Profit Motive and Political Democracy. Even after the fiery ordeal of World War II Europe is still a formidable question-mark not only to itself but to the whole

world. The East and the West are experiencing the repercussions of the incalculable consequences of this Armageddon.

The causes of this tragic state of affairs are not far to seek. Europe had indulged far too excessively in the vain worship of Mammon. Its economic ego had got the better of its nobler instincts. It always happens like that when economics is divorced from religion which alone tames the savage in the human breast. The over-emphasis on religion as supernaturalism unrelated to social life (this results from the misunderstanding of it) leads to barren asceticism and empty monasticism. The overstress on economics, as evidenced by the present-day ideologies, culminates in rabid materialism.

Now that many economic recipes and remedies have been tried with dismal failure, it will be a folly, pure and simple, to ascribe the persisting maladies to any other cause but the absence of religion from the economy of life. In the world of matter, European thinkers could not think of any remedies more effective than Communism and Fascism to restore economic equilibrium. But the whole West knows to its cost that these quack nostrums have uprooted humanity and have made confusion worse confounded. The present world situation with its agonising uncertainties is the legacy of the conflict of these rival ideologies.

If Capitalism was a kind of barbarism, Communism and Fascism are no better. If at all they mean anything they mean variation in the methods

of barbarism. If Capitalism was an organised robbery, the new economic doctrines strike no new note. They aim at no radical reform. They rob Peter to pay Paul. The problem ends where it began. The truest word about revolution was spoken by Millu-koff. "In Russia, Lenin built on the strong foundation of the old autocracy; outside Russia, Bolshevism is only a castle in the air." Dogmatic materialism and atheism are a part of the heritage of Karl Marx. The movement will develop into something entirely unlike its beginning. What the culmination will be, it is difficult to predict in a country which is as much Asiatic as European. Russia has nothing to teach the West and the destruction of religion cannot be more permanent than the destruction of private property and family. It is a quixotic venture to make water run uphill or twist a rope of sand. "You may expel Nature with a pitchfork," says an old proverb; "she will come back."

Bolshevism is hostile towards religion because of the latter's mystical aspects and its paraphernalia of rites and ceremonies. But it gained ascendancy only by plagiarising the ways and manners of religion. This is why it is now ironically called "religion." It has for its Holy Scriptures the teachings of Karl Marx which "are stupidly regarded as revealed, inspired and infallible." It has its commentators, scholars and evangelists and even martyrs. It has its dogmas, orthodoxies and heresies. It starts heresy-hunts and Infidel-slashings and stages Inquisitions and launches pogroms against doubters, disbelievers and apostates. It has its processes of initiation and excommunica-

tion. It has its Pantheon of idols and icons. It has its Vatican (Kremlin) and the Papal bulls (Dictator's writs). Its rituals and symbols are as intricate as those of any religion. It warms the heart of its believers by promises of salvation, hopes of millennium and schemes of rewards. To outward seeming, it exhibits no markedly wholesome improvement on religion in its time-honoured sense, though it seeks to eclipse and supersede it by slogans of anti-Godism. But it is a 'religion' of a curious sort. Religions claiming their origin in the divine revelation have been distinguished by two characteristics. In the first place, they have tried to strengthen the bonds of human society. In the second place they have endeavoured to discover some moral purpose in the governance of the Universe. The destructive traits of Bolshevism are diagonally opposite. Instead of cementing the bonds of union, it has fomented class struggle. Instead of discovering moral purpose it banishes all moral law from the social destiny of man. Lenin considered that it was the duty of his followers not only to 'liquidate' capitalists but also to eradicate all belief in God and to extinguish all lights of heaven." Thus it is obvious that even Bolshevism donned the mantle of religion to make an emotional appeal to man. In their furious fulminations against religion, the Bolsheviks clean forgot that they were defeating their own ends by borrowing its form and spirit from religion. They just succeeded in the superficial rearrangement of society. Human heart continues to elude their grasp.

What is wanted is a change of heart. This cannot

materialise under the wet blanket of the morbid economic doctrines. Religion, rightly understood, can bring about this change. It introduces in our lives a wholesome quantum of other-worldliness. It lifts our pursuits on to higher planes. It tells that life is more than meat and body is more than raiment. A truly adequate religion makes due allowance for the development of body. It permits proper catering for its needs. It does not deny or decry body. Body, it tells us, is an important vehicle of our life processes. But it is far from being the *summum bonum* of our existence. It is a means to an end. The stronger the means the greater the prospects of achieving the end. Europe has allowed herself to be so engrossed with "this-worldliness" that is to say a mere means has come to be regarded the goal of all human endeavours.

World without religion is like a villa on Vesuvius. Unless and until religion is restored to its proper place in the social framework, economic remedies will only aggravate the malady. Sooner or later the West is bound to stage a spectacular comeback to religion as the sole guarantee of salvaging civilisation. H.G. Wells who is above clerical bias visualises the rehabilitation of religious values. He says : "Out of the trouble and tragedy of this present time there may emerge a moral and intellectual revival, a religious revival, of a simplicity and scope to draw together men of alien races into one common and sustained way of living for the world's service. Religious emotion may presently blow through life again like a great wind bursting the doors and flinging open the shutters of the individual life."

Human welfare of the genuine sort depends upon the proper correlation of economics and religion. A true religion provides a true basis for secular and spiritual life. Those who have made a thorough study of Islam fearlessly claim that it seeks to guide its followers in secular as well as spiritual affairs. It supplies us with a sound conception of State and society. Spirituality is, no doubt, the vital core of the economy of Islam. But it does not ignore material welfare. It aims at making life worth living. It tells us that the whole Universe and all that is in it, is for the benefit of man.

Unlike Christianity and Buddhism, Islam takes due notice of the worldly aspects of man's life and lays down rules to enhance its purity and dignity. It inspires man with a quest for noble living. It seeks to make him an efficient member of society and not a recluse or an anchorite who exults in renouncing and donouncing the world and its affairs. God has endowed our earth with plentiful resources for the welfare of man. Man must, therefore, explore and exploit them to avail himself of them. He can do so not as a *Sanyasi* but as a citizen. This is why time and again he is urged by God to be active in his search for the means of living. The Holy Book says :

"And when the Prayer
Is finished, then may ye
Disperse through the land,
And seek of the Bounty
Of God : and celebrate
The Praises of God
Often (and without stint)
That ye may prosper."

(lxii : 10)

"For ye do worship idols
 Besides God, and ye invent
 Falsehood. The things that ye
 Worship besides God have
 No power to give ye sustenance :
 Then seek ye sustenance
 From God, serve Him
 And be grateful to him :
 To Him will be your return." (xxix : 17)
 "Others travelling through the land,
 Seeking of God's bounty." (lxxiii : 20)

The Holy Prophet (be peace on him) once said that the earning of a righteous living is next only to the worship of God. Again he is reported to have said, "After saying your early morning prayers, you should know no rest or sleep until you have made an honest endeavour for your livelihood." At one time, he went so far as to say that there are some sins which can only be atoned for by earnest exertions for earning one's living. Hazrat Umar also said, "Search for your livelihood in resources buried in the bowels of the earth. No man should lose heart in such endeavours." These remarks of Hazrat Umar have been commented upon and amplified by a religious writer of note who says that Hazrat Umar wanted to impress upon the people the supreme need of taking recourse to some legitimate means to earn their livelihood. This stress on the need and necessity of economic activities was not uncalled for. It was intended to tear off the cobwebs of erroneous notions about economic pursuits as incompatible with spiritual life. The mental horizon of the people of those days was overcast by the exaggerated virtues of monkery and

asceticism. A religion which sought to call into being a balanced society of sane and sensible people could not leave any loophole for the overt or covert incursion of life-denying other-worldliness.

It would have been an incomplete teaching if Islam had merely emphasised the need of earning livelihood. It has, therefore, laid down certain rules which govern and determine the form and intensity of wealth-earning activities of man. They are so restrained as to be in complete harmony with the peace and well-being of society as a whole. At no stage are these economic activities to be free from the yoke of moral considerations. This is why the individual is strictly enjoined to see that what he earns is 'pure' and the means he adopts to earn it are also above question. To this effect the Holy Quran says :

"O ye people :
 Eat of what is on earth,
 Lawful and good ;
 And do not follow
 The footsteps of the Evil One,
 For he is to you
 An avowed enemy." (ii : 168)

"O ye apostles : enjoy
 (All) things good and pure,
 And work righteousness :
 For I am well-acquainted
 With (all) that ye do." (xxiii : 51)

"... He allows
 Them as lawful what is good
 (And pure) and prohibits them
 From what is bad (and impure)." (vii : 157)

These verses are very comprehensive. They forbid the use of all such things as are impure. It is because new researches in the domain of dietetics have revealed that food plays a great part in the formation of character. Hence character-building which means nation-building should start from the regulation of food and the prohibition of such articles as vitiate mind and body and thus breed arrogance, conceit and self-aggrandisement. A man who is afflicted with such vices cannot be a useful member of society. Islam, therefore, dries up the very source and fountain of such evil habits by forbidding the use of all such things as corrupt the body and distort and distract the mind. These regulations may well be termed as ethics of diet. They go to ensure a state of the mind and body which is a condition precedent for pure and pious dealings in everyday life. This is the unique quality of the social teachings of the Holy Quran. A religion which regulates and controls even our menu with a view to making us pure can never fail to build up an ideal society which has been the cherished dream of utopian thinkers. Its adequacy to solve the urgent economic problems can be tried and tested only when its teachings relating to all spheres of life are followed in the letter and the spirit.

The strong injunction against "walking in the foot-steps of the Evil One" *خطوات الشيطان* is pregnant with a profound significance. It means the avoidance of all such economic activities as eventuate in the privation and deprivation of others. Ill-gotten wealth

is a canker which slowly but surely eats into the vitals of society. It is the seed-bed of Capitalism which is a synthetic term for the ruinous and revolting juxtaposition of poverty and property. A few fatten at the cost of many and thus kindle the fires of class-war. The Holy Quran strictly forbids such a tyrannical way of living and regards it as tantamount to following in the footsteps of Satan. Lawful living in the eyes of Islam is one which does not jeopardise the livelihood of others nor enslaves one section to the other. Some renowned commentators have laid great stress on the far-reaching significance of *خبائث* (Reprehensibles). This epithet applies not only to those things which are intrinsically dirty and repellent but also refers to those which may not be bad and unlawful in that sense, but which have been obtained by unlawful means as usury, bribe, force, fraud or theft. This clear emphasis on the legitimacy or otherwise of the articles of daily use raises an insurmountable barrier against the rise of the satanic system of Capitalism which divides and disintegrates society and concentrates wealth in a few hands and condemns the teeming millions to poverty and starvation.

As Islam builds up a balanced society, it not only interdicts self-mortification and monkish denial of worldly goods, but it also provides ample safeguards against a reasonable living degenerating into luxury and libertinism. It, therefore, bans the use of silken dresses and gold and silver utensils. The Holy Prophet (be peace on him) is reported to have said that those who strut about in gaudy and garish garments in this world, will be made to wear the dress of dis-

grace and humiliation in the next world— (*Abu Daud*). Again Hazrat Huzaifah says that the Holy Prophet (be peace on him) forbade partaking of food served in gold and silver plates and dishes and banned the use of silken dresses and beds—(*Bukhari*).

In a capitalistic regime, there is no check or restraint either on earning or spending. The result is social chaos and anarchy. Wealthy people indulge in "conspicuous waste" which not only leads them into all sorts of vices and immoralities but vulgarises the whole society. In the West where millionaires bestride society, corruption is the order of the day. Their amusements and recreations vitiate society to its very core. As an effective safeguard against such corruption, Islam imposes certain salutary restrictions on expenditure. The Holy Quran says:

"... eat and drink :
But waste not by excess.
For God loveth not the wasters." (vii : 31)

"Verily spendthrifts are brothers
Of the Evil Ones ;
And the Evil One
Is to his Lord (Himself)
Ungrateful." (xvii : 27)

These two verses forbid a reckless waste of wealth in pursuit of sensuous pleasures and thus tend to conserve it for beneficial use. Another significant verse is :

"Eat of the things which
God hath provided for you,
Lawful and good ; but fear
God, in Whom you believe." (v : 9)

As a rich man's expenditure has a great bearing on social life, it has been subjected to a strict regulation, lest it should undermine morals and paralyse lawful economic activities. Thus extravagance and improvidence are regarded as social vices and True Believers are warned against their evil effects on spiritual and mundane life.

The Islamic teachings in regard to the economic living of the individual would have been wanting in perfection if they had ignored the vice of chariness and cheese-paring meanness. In the East, there is a class of people who pile up mountains of wealth, but live on a disgustingly low plane. This stinginess is the potent cause of concentration and centralisation of wealth in a few hands and is a strong barrier against its equitable distribution among other sections of society. Wealth produced in the country flows into the underground vaults of these *banias* and *khojas* and lies there "frozen." This means gradual impoverishment and depletion of social resources. This is a species of Capitalism hardly to be met with in the West. There the capitalists amass money by investing it in business, and their banking concerns keep it in a state of active circulation. They are averse to its hoarding. But here in the East and more particularly in the Indo-Pak, subcontinent a *bania's* house is a sink of precious metals. What is earned is soon converted into gold and silver which are then stowed away in the cold bowels of the earth. Islam is equally severe on stinginess and extravagance. The Holy Quran says :

"Make not thy hand tied
(Like a niggard's) to thy neck,
Nor stretch it forth
To its utmost reach,
So that thou become
Blameworthy and destitute." (xvii: 29)

"Those who when they spend,
Are not extravagant and not
Niggardly, but hold a just (balance)
Between those extremes." (xxv: 67)

The Holy Prophet (be peace on him) is reported to have remarked that a man's wisdom and sanity consist in driving a middle course in his living. This moderation is achievable only when both earning and spending are kept under wholesome checks. Islam ensures this moderation in the economic life by a comprehensive system of checks and balances on the sources of income, the means of living and the avenues of expenditure. It thus arrests the growth of capitalistic tendencies. It is a proof positive of the fact that religion in its pure unalloyed form, can be a great regulator of the economic life of individuals and nations. Righteous and not riotous living is the fruit of religious controls. If economics has come to be called a dismal science and if its principles have been misapplied, it is because it denied itself the spiritualising influence of religion. Divorced from religion, economics has become the handmaid of the capitalists who exploit its principles to feather their nests. A vital and dynamic religion aims at a balanced life. It teaches a man to be "true to the kindred points of heaven and home." Its other-worldly aspect, if rightly understood, is complementary to its teach-

ings about worldly existence. It gives a moral poise to a worldly man and disabuses his mind of all desires and designs of social usurpation. The supra-personal sanction, it provides for conduct, is essentially necessary as a form in social development. The conscious contempt of unscrupulous economic pursuits breeds a sense of moral elevation. The emotional side of human life cannot be satisfied without religious ideals. When the material good of man is held up as the be-all and end-all of our existence, we get low moral ideals inconsistent with the boasted superiority of the ethics of reason. Dr. Iqbal in his lecture "Is Religion Possible?" has given a vivid and convincing account of the consequences which flow from the divorce of religion from man's actual life. He says :

"Thus wholly overshadowed by the results of his intellectual activity the modern man has ceased to live soulfully, i.e. from within. In the domain of thought he is living in open conflict with himself ; and in the domain of economic and political life he is living in open conflict with others. He finds himself unable to control his ruthless egoism and his infinite gold hunger which is gradually killing all higher striving in him and bringing him nothing but life-weariness. . . . In the wake of his systematic materialism has come that paralysis of energy which Huxley apprehended and deplored. The condition of things in the East is no better. The technique of mediaeval mystics by which religious life, on its higher manifestations developed itself both in the

East and the West has now practically failed. And in the Muslim East, it has perhaps done far greater havoc than anywhere else. Far from reintegrating the forces of the average man's inner life and thus preparing him for participation in the march of history, it has taught him a false renunciation and made him perfectly contented with his ignorance and spiritual thralldom. No wonder then that modern Turkey, Egypt and Persia are led to seek fresh sources of energy in the creation of new loyalties, such as patriotism and nationalism which Nietzsche described as "sickness and unreason" and "the strongest force against culture."

"Disappointed of a purely religious culture which alone brings us into touch with the everlasting fountain of life and power by expanding our thought and emotion, the modern Muslim fondly hopes to unlock fresh sources, of energy by narrowing down his thought and emotion. Modern atheistic socialism which possesses all the fervour of a new religion has a broader outlook, but having been inspired by Hegelians of the Left Wing, it rises in revolt against the very source which could have given it strength and purpose. Both nationalism and atheistic socialism, at least in the present state of human adjustments, must draw upon the psychological forces of hate, suspicion and resentment which tend to impoverish the soul of man and close up his hidden sources of spiritual energy. Neither the technique of mediaeval mysticism nor nationalism nor atheistic socialism can cure the ills of despairing humanity. Surely the present moment is one of great crisis in

the history of modern culture. The modern world stands in need of biological renewal. And religion which on its higher manifestation is neither dogma nor priesthood nor ritual can alone ethically prepare the modern man for the burden of the great responsibility which the advancement of modern science necessarily involves, and restore to him that attitude of faith which makes him capable of winning a personality here and retaining it hereafter. It is only by rising to a fresh vision of his origin and future, his whence and whither that man will eventually triumph over a society motivated by an inhuman competition and a civilisation which has lost its spiritual unity by its inner conflict of religious and political values."

When the Muslims forgot the Quranic teachings they imbibed the influence of Christianity. Even some noted scholars began to dissociate economics from true religion. Asceticism was held out as an ideal for the faithful. The result was that the Muslims lapsed into the morass of misery and poverty. The priest-class (Mullahs) rose into ascendancy, and sapped the vigour and vitality of the Muslim masses. The corrosive influence of the priestcraft began to permeate the body-politic and body-social. Bottom fell out of the Muslim polity. The letter remained but the spirit vanished. The tragedy of it was that the decline of the Muslim powers synchronised with the rise of Europe as a mighty force in the world. The ultimate result was that the Turkish Empire, the greatest Muslim State, went to pieces and Turkey came to be sarcastically known as "the sickman of Europe."

Islam lost all ground in Europe. The Saracenic power became 'one with Nineveh and Tyre.' The overweening sense of his worldly glory, his complete departure from the straight path of Islam, his failure to read the signs of the times sealed the doom of the Saracen. He became a chartered libertine. History which comes down to us rich with the spoils of time had no lesson for him. He failed and failed signally to benefit by the events taking place under his very nose.

The Saracen's genius for government was intuitive, inborn and self-taught. But he failed to assess the situation correctly and continued to live in the fog of self-complacency. He did not emulate Europe by turning over a new leaf in his book. This moral and material decadence was due to his failure to re-interpret Islam and relate it to life. The influence of alien ideals of the West left him a spiritual scarecrow.

The process of degeneration continued, until under the influence of the Pan-Islamic Movement started by Sultan Abdul Hamid, the Muslim world felt a throb of life. It revived flagging hopes. It seemed to open out new vistas of development. All eyes turned to the Turkish Sultan. But the hopes had come from a vanishing source. Constantinople itself was the hotbed of intrigues. The Caliphate was tottering on its last legs. It fostered vipers in its bosom. It could not vouchsafe driving energy to Pan-Islamism which passed away like a spasm creating a wave of suspicion in the enemy camp. European Powers began to regard Turkey as a stick of dynamite, hence

their efforts to smother it underfoot. Europe's superb diplomacy soon entrapped the Caliph in its meshes. A great Muslim annalist quite aptly remarks : "Pan-Islamism is a phantasm abstracted from the Muslim profession of religious fraternity and magnified by European imagination while it is embraced by Muslims owing to their supposed need of it. Both the fears of the Europeans and the hopes of the Muslims on this subject are futile because as a matter of fact phantasms do not materialise."

The Muslims all over the world have now realised that the revival of Islam and the vindication of its high and noble ideals of life cannot be accomplished by the use of political potions and pick-me-ups borrowed from the West, but by the sincere and scrupulous observance of its teachings in our day-to-day life. It is its correlation with social life that will unfold its unique capacity to eliminate strife and confusion from society and lead man to the Land of Promise. It does not stand in need of adventitious aids from human thought and ingenuity. It is an all-sufficing and self-evolving code and offers fuller and richer life. It satisfies all the aspirations of the human heart in a way that no other faith has ever done. It teaches us that if God is not conceived in such a way that we cannot do without Him in the satisfaction of a want, in our dealings with people, in earning money, in reading a book, in passing an examination, in the doing of the most trifling or the most important duty, then it is plain that we have not felt any connection between God and life. We are not necessarily seeking God when we call Him Infinite, most

Beneficent, Omnipotent and so forth. An empty reiteration of these attributes of God only soothes our mind, but does not enthuse our soul. This is why Islam enjoins its followers to begin and end every conceivable act and activity with an oral prayer. What we conceive of God should be of daily, nay, hourly guidance to us. The very conception of God should stir us to seek Him in the midst of our daily lives. If we do not take God and religion in this light, they drop out of our intimate daily consideration and become only a one-day-in-a-week affair.

It is this vitalising teaching of Islam which justifies its existence and lifts it high above other religions. Dennis Saraut in his *History of Religions*, writes :

“Mohammadanism is not unequipped for survival in the modern world. Its great principles are simple and rational, it carries less theology than Christianity and Buddhism. It is from another angle a more complete religion : it feeds on the political life of its people, whereas Christianity and politics are practically divorced. The Mussalmans are probably more attached to their religion than the Christians. It requires from them less effort and imposes few inhibitions on their nature.”

VII

THE GOLDEN CALF

Not only are the rich not compactly united among themselves, but there is no real bond between them and the poor. Their relative position is not a permanent one ; they are constantly drawn together or separated by their interests. The workman is generally dependent on the master, but not on any particular master ; these two men meet in the factory, but know not each other elsewhere ; and while they come into contact on one point, they stand very far apart on all others. The manufacturer asks nothing of the workman but his labour ; the workman expects nothing from him but his wages. The one contracts no obligation to protect, nor the other to defend, and they are not permanently connected either by habit or by duty Between the workman and the master there are frequent relations, but no real partnership.

—Tocqueville

Capitalism is a religion of the Golden Calf and the most astonishing thing of all is that there are disinterested defenders of it. Capitalism is not only an outrage upon the ‘have-nots’ and the oppression of the ‘have-nots’, it is above all an outrage upon and the persecution of, human personality, of every human personality.

—Nicolas Berdyaev

If we survey history through the Marxian glasses, we find it a mighty, inexorable process of dynamic class-relationships flaring into class-antagonisms and after a period of clash and conflict, again subsiding into a "social whole" best suited to the needs of the contemporary times. Marx holds and his frantic and fanatic followers still cling to his notion, that in the world of matter this process of Thesis-Antithesis-and-Synthesis works with a fatalistic inexorability. The driving force behind this tremendous movement is the Hunger-urge and hunger escalates into anger and poverty pits itself against property. It is the material needs of man which shape the course of the whole history. Stretching this theory to unconscionable lengths, the Marxists go one better and assert that all religions and cultures, morals and ethics and social and legal set-ups are the palpable manifestations of the system of economic relations subsisting at the moment. It is a tendentiously overdrawn rather perverted picture of a historic process. But all the same, it cannot be denied that man's material needs, in no small measure, determine his destiny on earth and even the political systems are subject to the exigencies of the contemporaneous economic organisations. This fact can be verified by a retrospective glance at history. In the whirling, eddying confusion of the fourth and the fifth century, we perceive the faint and blurred outlines of an economic system of sorts. For convenience's sake, it is called feudalism. In the long lineal ancestry of our present-day Bourgeois Regime, it occupies a prominent place. It gained more definite proportions, in the

eleventh and twelfth centuries. Judged by our modern standards, it could not even then be called a system or an ideology. It was, as H.G. Wells calls it, a confusion roughly organised. The nucleus was the *fief* which was land, but might be any desirable thing, as an office, a revenue in money or kind, the right to collect a toll or operate a mill. In return for the *fief*, the man became the vassal of the lord; he cringed and kowtowed before him. With his hands between his lord's, the vassal promised him unfailing fealty and sincere service. So long as he remained steadfast in his allegiance to the lord, the vassal retained his title to the *fief*. His service relations constituted the political aspect of the system. This inevitably overshadowed his economic activities. He could earn his living under the grim shadow of the over-lordship of his Feudal Boss. Besides military service and the daily mounting guard on the lord's castle, most of these serfs were tied to the soil and deprived of the freedom of movement. Their onerous and endless labour allowed them no opportunity to avail themselves of the amenities and immunities of the commercial towns springing up in their close neighbourhood. They also could not sell what they produced. This state of affairs went on until it was interrupted by the rise of urban life on a higher plane. The birth of towns was a challenge to the feudal supremacy. In the Marxian jargon it amounted to the emergence of an antithesis. The contradiction became stark and stern. The multiplication of towns, the increase of their population and the extension of commercial and industrial activities involved the bourgeoisie in an

antagonism of interests with the feudal lords. The nascent economy, the work of merchant guilds and the guilds of handicraftsmen which arose out of them, regarded feudalism as a fetter which hindered, hampered and hamstrung free bread-earning activities.

The newly-born industrialism pressed for freedom of movement, freedom of trade, freedom to turn to any business or to hire oneself to any kind of employer. Feudalism meant the absence of all such freedoms and much more. It resisted the change, but failed to arrest it. In the resultant clash, it suffered a debacle. The French Revolution with its triple cry of "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity," symbolised the dawn of a new era. Freedom of trade and profession was followed by intense economic activities all over Europe. Science became the hand-maid of humanity. The bolts of Jupiter were domesticated and harnessed to the service of man. Machines were invented. The new mechanical contraptions relieved man of his grievous toil. New lands were discovered and colonised. This let loose a flood of raw materials for factories which bristled the urban area and hummed day and night in the ceaseless production of material goods which were carried in ships to the ends of earth. Trade and industry combined together, released a huge spate of wealth for the proper and peaceful use of which Europe was then as is even now ethically and spiritually unprepared. Industrial development outstripped moral development. What did it signify? It signified that while there had been a highly efficient organisation of external nature, there had

been no proportionate advance in the inner moral nature. The psyche of man had failed to keep pace with his economic, political and scientific progress. This lag further arrested the growth of moral sense and produced dire consequences. In the first flush of the economic renaissance the lurking dangers of the industrial civilisation were not perceived or properly assessed and appraised. But they continued to grow all the same. They ultimately crystallised into a sharp split in society. People became divided into 'Lazarus' and 'Dives' and the new industrialism slowly but surely donned the mantle of pernicious Capitalism. This naturally caused a widespread social distress which set minds thinking. It was realised that the specious and spurious political "Liberty" had undermined "Equality" and the slogan of 'Fraternity' sounded hollow as it had lost all significance. Freedom of business resulting in cut-throat competition became incompatible with "Freedom from Want" and "Freedom from Fear." This cast serious repercussions on the life of the people. Economic deterioration ran parallel with the decay of morals and politics. Democracy became the government of the capitalists by the capitalists. Hence they enacted laws to perpetuate their ascendancy and they succeeded famously in their nefarious designs. Freedom became a mirage for the working class. "Men must be free inwardly, for them outward freedom is useless." So said Heine and the truth of it was vindicated by the existence and persistence of economic slavery in the atmosphere of outward political freedom. John Strachey in his book *Menace of Fascism* writes :

"Freedom in capitalist society always remains just about the same as it was in the ancient Greek Republics freedom for the slave-owners. The modern wage-slaves owing to the condition of capitalist exploitation are so crushed by want and poverty that democracy is nothing to them, politics is nothing to them; that in the ordinary course of events, the majority of the population is debarred from participating in social and political life."

Expatriating on the same theme, he adds:

"There is no such thing as democracy in the abstract. Great Britain, France and America are capitalist democracies as opposed to capitalist dictatorships. But they are democracies for the ruling classes of those countries. They are most effective dictatorships of the property-owning class. And the moment the democratic forms of Government endanger the dictatorship, the real power of the property-owning class, these forms are scrapped."

As the new industrialism inculcated stupid reverence for "the Almighty Dollar," man was respected for his money and not for his merit. In the temple of human rights the Golden Calf was set up for worship. Capitalists were its serpent guardians. They, in their turn, were 'adored' by the victims of their exploitation. Thus the ties of human relationships snapped under the impact of the money economy. The cash-nexus alone survived to bind man to man. Religion once a great dynamic force for unification retreated before the onslaught of Capitalism. The late Professor J.M. Keynes (promoted peer before his death) gives a vivid account of the influence of the baleful star of

the money economy on man's mind. In his booklet *A Short View of Russia*, he writes:

"At any rate to me it seems clearer every day that the moral problem of our age is concerned with the love of money, with the habitual appeal to the Money Motives in nine-tenths of the activities of life, with the universal striving for the individual economic activity, the social approbation of money as the measure of constructive success and with the social appeal to the hoarding instinct as the foundation for the necessary provision for the family and for the failure."

Mammonism with its diabolic offshoots was writ large on the horizon and all thinkers and writers saw in it a serious threat to social peace and thought long and hard to remove it. As long as it persisted there could be no concord and harmony. Henri Massis in his *Defence of the West* writes:

"Modern civilisation is the great evil, in that it makes material well-being the one end of life and that it bewitches Europeans and corrupts Orientals, that it makes them slaves of money, incapable of peace and of inner repose."

These rather profuse but inescapable quotations throw into sharp relief the canker that is gnawing at the roots of the Western civilisation. Unless moral balance is restored and spiritual values are rehabilitated, there can be abiding peace. World War II was the eruption of the social volcano which had been seething and sizzling all these years. In one of his lucid intervals Nietzsche wrote in the same strain:

"We need, in order to dissolve the cash-nexus,

a revolution, a great renewal of society. Before economic life can be put on the modest plane, where it belongs, it must be properly subordinated to the moral and the spiritual life of the community. Justice not wealth must be the measure of utility. And Justice? It is at any rate the opposite of the prevailing capitalistic spirit. Socialism is merely the workman's aping envy of his master. To cure the workman of his socialism the upper classes must cure themselves of their Capitalism." (*The Will to Power.*)

European thinkers did not rest content merely with diagnosing the disease which afflicted the European body politic or with hazarding odd suggestions to set things to rights. Socialism is the first serious attempt to grapple with the evils of Capitalism. Up till 1848, it was in an embryonic stage resting on and appealing to ethical considerations. It launched no offensive against the Capitalistic system. Its leaders, Robert Owen, William Morris and Saint-Simon appealed to the factory-owners to give up their aggrandisement and treat the workers benevolently. But the Midas-eared capitalists did not heed these moral and emotional appeals. They could not see their way to abdicate their economic sovereignty for the asking, nor could they persuade themselves to relax their iron hold on the economic machinery. Even when they realised their monstrosities and its dire consequences, they could not give them up. R. P. Dutt rightly observes, "Capitalism can no more be socially organised than tiger can produce honey. The organisation of production for social needs is incompatible with Capitalism, since the line of social needs and the line

of greatest profit do not coincide." (*Socialism and the Living Age*)

At best what the capitalists were made to do for the wage-earners was the grant of bounties and subsidies which were demoralising both to the profiteers and the proletariat. This move was nowhere near even the milk-and-water Socialism preached by the pre-Marxian socialists. One might as well regard as Socialism, the perpetual pension conferred by Charles II on his illegitimate children.

Owen and Morris simply paved the way for Marx and Engels who burst upon the capitalistic world as stormy petrels. Not only did they breathe fire and brimstone against "Expropriators", but hurled a gauntlet in their face in the form of the Communist Manifesto in 1848. They wrote :

"The Communists disclaim to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at the worker's revolution. The proletarians have nothing but their chains to lose. They have a world to win."

This open ultimatum to capitalists brought to an end the era of Utopian Socialism and marked the beginning of militant Socialism. It is also known as Scientific Socialism (Communism) because it offered both an ideal and a method to achieve it. The ideal was the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat" and the method was the dethronement of the profit motives and the destruction of the capitalistic system. While elaborating his own point of view and that of Marx,

Engels defined the intentions of the Communists as follows :

1. "To achieve the interests of the proletariat in opposition to those of the bourgeoisie.
2. To do this through the abolition of private property and its replacement by community of goods.
3. To recognise no means of carrying out these objects other than a democratic revolution."

(See Marx-Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 2.)

Marx launched the oppressed workers on the war-path against their oppressors. He opened before their vision a vast vista of violent and valiant struggle for emancipation. He said, "Ahead of us lie, 15, 20, 50 years of civil wars between peoples, not only in order to change existing relations, but also in order to change your very 'selves' and make yourselves fit for political domination."

Communism proclaimed its heart-warming formula of "From everybody according to his ability and to everybody according to his needs" and undertook to bring it to fruition through a complete social upheaval. This in itself was bad because it confused revolution with thunder, storm, explosion, sound and fury. What made it worse was that it made a dead set even against religion and morals and dubbed them as the bulwarks of the bourgeoisie institutions. This aspect of the Marxian creed may be made clear by a quotation from Lenin's speech in which he said,

"We repudiate all morality which proceeds from supernatural idea or ideas which are outside class conceptions. In our view morality is entirely subordinate to the interests of class-war; everything is moral which is necessary for the annihilation of the old exploiting social order and for the uniting of the proletariat. Our morality thus consists solely in close discipline and conscious war against the exploiters. We do not believe in eternal principles of morality and we will expose this deception. Communist morality is identical with the fight for the strengthening of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat."

This debased concept of morality calls to mind Goethe's phrase "Socialism has gone on tombs forward;" tombs not only of the decadent profitism, but tombs also of eternal human values. A socio-economic scheme which necessitates not mere social overhaul, but an overall sanguinary destruction, cannot pass muster with an average human being. Communism, therefore, looks more like an apotheosis of social despair and desperation than a genuine plan of a splendid mission for human deliverance from poverty and misery. It is a crazy-quilt of glaring contradictions. For instance, it demands man to conquer the elemental forces of nature, to organise, regulate and rationalise the life of society. The individual belongs to society and he must, therefore, devote to it all his physical and mental powers. He must serve the cause of remaking the world. But the attainment of these high and noble aims, demands the religious energy of the spirit, postulates the capacity for self-sacrifice in the establishment of

the human social order. How is Communism to requisition this huge reservoir of spiritual energy when the springs of religious life are dried up by the inculcation of atheistic humanism? When man is given no time to ponder the meaning of his existence, when in him there is left no trace of inner centre, no inner life and urge towards God, he can never accomplish anything high and noble.

Marx despised moral values and preached an amoral outlook on life. But in his war against "blood-suckers" he provoked moral indignation and "righteous revolt" of the Dispossessed Classes because exploitation is more a moral than an economic category. If all social phenomena are to be studied from an amoral point of view and no distinction is to be made between good and bad then there is little occasion for inveighing against exploitation, which is the concomitant evil of the capitalistic mode of production and distribution. A religious-minded man whose moral concepts are rooted in the God-idea has more reason to feel indignant against exploitation than a Marxian materialist. Hence Communism contradicts itself by condemning a moral evil without working a deep moral change in its votaries. The result of this inner contradiction is that the reformation wrought by revolutionary virulence and violence is short-lived. Even in its brief duration, it is not an unmixed good because now many oppress the few. Oswald Spengler was not wrong when he characterised Communism as the capitalism of the labourers. But a system of human valuations suffused with the God-idea views problems in a spirit of imperturbable calm and serene

disinterestedness and is likely to bring about a lasting and consummate change.

Communism is a social titanism. Man is liquidated in society. He is made to devote himself to super-personal ends for the greater glory of the Communist society. But when man finally ceases to exist as an independent entity, society, he is out to build up, will also come to an end. This is another instance of a deep contradiction. It also lies like a stick of dynamite at the roots of the Marxian ideology. Communism gives the human soul a poor substitute for spiritual life. It does not give man the real nectar and ambrosia which his spirit hungers and thirsts for. Grace which emanates from a collectivised society cannot replace what descends from God. The result of a divorce from the fountain-head of divinity is social tyranny. This is clearly brought out in Dr. Dillon's *Russia Today and Tomorrow* in which he writes:

"Bolshevism takes its origin in the unplumbed depths of being; nor could it have come into existence were it not for the necessity of putting an end to the injustices and iniquities that infect our superannuated civilisation. It is amoral and inexorable, because transcendental. It has come not for peace but for the sword; and its victims outnumber those of the most sanguinary wars. To me it seems to be the mightiest driving force, for good or evil in the world today. It is stern reality smelling of sulphur and brimstone."

It is tragic that this historic movement aiming at the deliverance of man is bereft of spiritual foundations. It only weakens its appeal through the dogmatic denial of God and transcendental values. Its much-boasted universalism is a pleasant myth, because it starts on its career as a class-movement and continues to thrive on class-oppression. The tragedy deepens when through its psychological contradictions it fails of its grand purpose. Class-less society never materialises. But what actually crystallises and what is preserved and perpetuated by a huge administrative apparatus is the supremacy of the Communist Party which is not co-extensive with the Labour Class. The party in the saddle cannot be altruistic in the real sense. The tables are soon turned and the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat" gradually deteriorates into "Dictatorship over the Proletariat." It was this irritating state of affairs which actuated Aldous Huxley to remark :

"It (Soviet system) is an elaborately hierarchical society, ruled by a small group of men who are ready to employ the extremes of physical and economical coercion against those who disagree with their views; a society in which according to reliable observers, the exclusive and ultimately bellicose spirit of nationalism is growing in intensity, a society in which the principle of authority is accepted without question and violence is taken for granted. Within Russia's society the economic system has been changed to this extent that individuals cannot own the means of production and are, therefore, unable as owners to coerce their fellow

human beings. But though individuals cannot coerce as owners they can coerce as representatives of the State. (Let us remember, incidentally, that the State is merely a name for certain individuals using power either lawlessly or else according to certain rules.) The principle of coercion has survived the revolution and is, in fact, still ruthlessly applied.

"If we accept the crude doctrine of class-war as enough, it means that the plan of life which Capitalism has imposed on us is the only evil that we have to fight. Capitalism itself is an outward symptom of some deeper disorder. There is now a consensus of opinion that it is the spiritual bankruptcy which has created a widespread chaos of competing barbarisms in the affairs of man."

Fascism is another serious attempt to restore balance in human society. It is not an independent social philosophy as Marxism is. Its way has been "to act first and then philosophise." Essentially it is a cult force conveniently adopted by a leader who makes his *debut* as a crowd-compeller and a tear-jerker, and aspires to become a superman and a world-conqueror. It does not openly deny religion and morals. It swears by spiritual values. But all these are opportunist measures to frustrate the Marxist venture.

It does not abolish private property. But it does not condone the continuance of capitalists in their freedom from the State control. Its formula is "Everything for the State. Everything within the State. Nothing outside the State." Thus the State is deified

It is tragic that this historic movement aiming at the deliverance of man is bereft of spiritual foundations. It only weakens its appeal through the dogmatic denial of God and transcendental values. Its much-boasted universalism is a pleasant myth, because it starts on its career as a class-movement and continues to thrive on class-oppression. The tragedy deepens when through its psychological contradictions it fails of its grand purpose. Class-less society never materialises. But what actually crystallises and what is preserved and perpetuated by a huge administrative apparatus is the supremacy of the Communist Party which is not co-extensive with the Labour Class. The party in the saddle cannot be altruistic in the real sense. The tables are soon turned and the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat" gradually deteriorates into "Dictatorship over the Proletariat." It was this irritating state of affairs which actuated Aldous Huxley to remark :

"It (Soviet system) is an elaborately hierarchical society, ruled by a small group of men who are ready to employ the extremes of physical and economical coercion against those who disagree with their views; a society in which according to reliable observers, the exclusive and ultimately bellicose spirit of nationalism is growing in intensity, a society in which the principle of authority is accepted without question and violence is taken for granted. Within Russia's society the economic system has been changed to this extent that individuals cannot own the means of production and are, therefore, unable as owners to coerce their fellow

human beings. But though individuals cannot coerce as owners they can coerce as representatives of the State. (Let us remember, incidentally, that the State is merely a name for certain individuals using power either lawlessly or else according to certain rules.) The principle of coercion has survived the revolution and is, in fact, still ruthlessly applied.

"If we accept the crude doctrine of class-war as enough, it means that the plan of life which Capitalism has imposed on us is the only evil that we have to fight. Capitalism itself is an outward symptom of some deeper disorder. There is now a consensus of opinion that it is the spiritual bankruptcy which has created a widespread chaos of competing barbarisms in the affairs of man."

Fascism is another serious attempt to restore balance in human society. It is not an independent social philosophy as Marxism is. Its way has been "to act first and then philosophise." Essentially it is a cult force conveniently adopted by a leader who makes his *debut* as a crowd-compeller and a tear-jerker, and aspires to become a superman and a world-conqueror. It does not openly deny religion and morals. It swears by spiritual values. But all these are opportunist measures to frustrate the Marxist venture.

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and by some mystical process identified with the leader.

The economic aspect of this movement will always remain fluid. Some observers regard it as the re-establishment of Capitalism on a basis of monopoly, autarky and State control. Others consider it as a form of perverted Communism in which the sole aim is the lust for State power. A third view suggests that it is simply military dictatorship in which the only criterion of economic measures is the war-potential of the nation. Whether economic planning is a mere camouflage or the real purpose of the Fascist leaders, it occupies no mean place in their programme of social reconstruction.

In the Fascist doctrine, production in all forms, whether material or intellectual, is a social duty because it benefits the individual and enhances the strength of the nation. The whole body of production is a single unit under the guardianship of the State. Here it comes to resemble the Marxian Socialism as it obtains in Russia. But it parts company with Marxism in its attitude towards private enterprise. Article 9 of the *Carta del Lavoro* definitely declares that it considers private initiative in the field of production as the most useful and efficacious instrument for the interests of the Nation. Fascism also attaches supreme importance to private property, because it holds that its suppression will mean the suppression of capital and the suppression of capital will spell disaster to production. It proceeds on the assumption that there is no inherent anta-

gonism between labour and capital. The State has only to collar and control these two factors to render them innocuous and convert them into harmonious collaborators. In its vain attempt to outrival Communism it makes a brave show of its sympathy with the labour class. Mussolini, a renegade from Socialism and the Father of Fascism while fulminating against Socialism as "a mechanical equaliser of human values" never failed to say a few consolatory words for the workers. He said on various occasions—(a) "We are not against labour, but against the Socialist Party in so far as it remains anti-Italian." (May 1920, at Milan), (b) "The Fascist Government cannot and does not wish to be anti-proletariat. The workmen are a vital part of the Nation." (December 1922, at Milan); (c) "You can rest assured that in this Italy the workmen—all labourers both of the brains and of the hands, will take, as is right, the first place." (January 1923). He once characterised the working classes as "sacredly necessary" to the Nation. The programme of November 8, 1921, had in its social legislation such as eight hours a day, obligatory insurance against accidents, old age pensions, etc. Fascism works its industrial programme through corporations which do not possess legal personality, but constitute administrative organs of the State. Their functions are:

- (a) to conciliate the controversies which may arise between the organisations co-ordinated,
- (b) to promote, encourage and sustain all measures to co-ordinate production and improve its organisation.

Every corporation has a council consisting of representatives of the employers and workers. But the Fascist social policy outlined above is a mere device to forestall and frustrate Communism in Italy. It succeeded in banishing it lock, stock and barrel from his country. The corporations under Fascism perpetuate State hegemony over the working class and the owning class. The members of corporations have no voice in their affairs. They are run by the secretary who is not elected, but is a party nominee.

The Corporative State claimed to have settled the thorny problem of the relations of capital and labour. Here we see the working of the bureaucratic machinery of control. Labour disputes must be settled by the arbitration of some official and strikes are forbidden by law; there is a continual bias of the State towards the employers, for the State is mainly interested in production and regards the worker only as an instrument. Ambiguity permeates the high-sounding phraseology of the leaders of the regime. The Charter of Labour is full of fine platitudes, but gives the worker actually nothing except a sense that out of the revolution, his welfare is an active concern of the State. "We need to speak of permanent revolution," said Mussolini, "because the phrase exerts a mystical influence upon the masses." In place of "Economic Man" devoid of finer and nobler sentiments, but motivated by economic urges and devoted to the realisation of his material interests, the Fascist State substituted a hypothetical "Corporative Man," who subordinates individual enterprises to the prosperity of the community.

According to it, the individual is only an *ensemble* of social relations. He derives his dignity from these relations. Apart from these he is nothing. To compensate him for the loss of his status as a free moral agent he is guaranteed economic competence. He is but a cell in the body-social. From the cradle to the grave each and every aspect of his life is regulated by the new Leviathan.

There was a short-lived spurt in the economic life in Italy. Then deterioration set in and it was cleverly concealed by statistical charlatanism. Mussolini's battles for conquering unemployment were in a large part re-arrangements of statistics, while the loudly-proclaimed public works schemes were small relative to other countries. The legislation governing labour conditions achieved less rather than more, than in other countries since the war. This is borne out by a report of Mussolini's public works in the *New Statesman and Nation*, November 18, 1933:

"There is a real progress in the production of hydro-electric power. Great Britain, without hydraulic resources, is making even greater progress in a similar field. As for transport, old roads have been macadamised and repaired, and new roads completed. But the total expenditure of the Road Board since 1928 was only 64,000,000. Scarcely an impressive effort for 'a new economic system,' 670 miles of new roads were completed in four years in Italy. In Great Britain, without Fascism, 1,300 miles of Class I roads were completed in the four years end-

ing 1931. And they are much better roads. The total expenditure on public works during the ten years of the Fascist regime is less than the annual loans for local works out of the Local Loans Fund in Great Britain.

"The index figure for the cost of living has fallen 15.73 per cent since 1927. But industrial wages have been reduced by a much larger proportion. Reductions effected without the consent of the Syndical Organisations are widely found. In the glass industries the reductions range from 20 to 40 per cent; in the cotton trade 40 per cent, in silk weaving 38 per cent; in the metallurgical trades 20 per cent; excluding reductions in the case of individual firms which had been accorded on a vast scale. Additional supplementary and arbitrary reductions without negotiations have been effected by the regarding of work staffs and the systematic reduction of piece rates. . . . As for the state of business, bankruptcies, great and small, exceeded 21,000 in 1932, which beats the British record five times over."

The facts and figures quoted above speak for themselves. Fascism proved a signal fiasco to redeem the land of its birth from the clutches of poverty and distress. England—a stronghold of Capitalism, had in comparison a more proud record of achievements in the domain of economics. Ever since the inception of Fascism, Italy presented a depressing picture of people smarting under the yoke of a unique serfdom. In the shrine of human rights one could see perched on a high pedestal the Golden Calf and over it rose

the sprawling figure of a crack-brained, fire-eating leader, who under the fanfare of fine phrases, dug his ferocious fingers into the vitals of his nation and made it dance to his tunes. Still "all the lambs had all the sins of the lions on their consciences." H.G. Wells was quite right when he dubbed Fascism as "the revolt of a clumsy lout against civilisation."

Nazism was another false dawn on the benighted horizon of Europe. Smarting under the inhuman load of reparations and incensed at the ruthless mutilations of her territory by her conquerors, Germany developed symptoms of "collective neurosis." Communism came to exploit this gloomy situation to further its revolutionary ends. Communists at first succeeded wonderfully with the frustrated but expectant nation. But they merely staged infructuous insurrections. The vacuum and void continued as grim as before. It was in this mood of disillusionment that Germany welcomed with a cry of hosanna a crazy bricklayer from Bavaria to build up her dilapidated socio-economic structure. Hitler made a political capital out of the national neurosis of the defeated Germany. He organised the National Socialist German Workers' Party (N.S D A.P.) and seized power by a *coup d'etat*, in 1933. He proclaimed his doctrine—National Socialism—a new *weltanschauung*, co-extensive with the multifarious aspects of national life. The economic part of his programme is as follows:

1. National Socialism recognises private property in principle and gives it the protection of the State.

2. The national welfare, however, demands that a limit shall be set to the amassing of wealth in the hands of individuals.

3. All Germans form a working community for the promotion of general welfare and culture.

4. Within the limits of obligation of every German to work and the fundamental recognition of private property, every German is free to earn his living and to dispose of the results of his labour.

5. The healthy combination of all forms of business, small and large, in every domain of economic life, including agriculture shall be encouraged.

6. All existing businesses which until now have been in the form of trusts shall be nationalised.

7. Usury and profiteering and personal enrichment at the expense of, or to the injury of the nation, shall be punished with death.

8. Introduction of obligation to work for a fixed period for the State is incumbent upon all Germans.

In more points than one, Fascism and Nazism are like Siamese twins. It was natural, therefore, that Nazism should have a family likeness with the Italian system. In both cases, Communism was thwarted by the Fascist leaders who raised the Bolshevik bogey and filled their people with a haunting dread of the Russian experiment. To camouflage the reactionary

character of their own movements Nazism and Fascism imparted a strong socialistic bias to their programmes of economic reconstruction. Communism which had 'caught on' could not be circumvented otherwise. Their devilish devices served them well. They gave short shrift to the Communistic movement by duping the unwary workers to lionise and canonize them as the Schemes for human salvation.

Nazism which possessed more diabolic dynamism than its Italian prototype went one better. It introduced the racial theory as the *leit motiv* of National Socialism. This theory in its original form may be summed up as follows :

1. Everything about a human being is conditioned by the race or races from which he comes.
2. The Nordics are the best of all the races.
3. All race mixtures are harmful.
4. The Jews are the deadly enemies of the German people.

5. The great majority of Germans consists of a mixture of six "White European" races in the following order of importance—Nordic, Ostic, Dinatic, East Baltic, Falic and Westic. There are also slight strains of Jewish Negro, Inner Asiatic, Gypsy and Sudelic blood in the German people. (*People under Hitler*, by

Wallace Denel, p, 134.)

The Germans were told to regard themselves as the proud inheritors of a racial destiny—the destiny of conquerors and "civilisers." "The road the Aryan (Nordic) had to travel was," Hitler said, "clearly marked out. As a conqueror he overthrew the inferior

men and their work was done under his control, according to his will and for his purpose." In the Italian ideology the State is held out as the summit of the cosmic process. In National Socialism it is the Race. "The main principle, we must observe," says Hitler, "is that the State is not an end but a means." The driving force behind Nazism is not Nationalism but Racialism.

But in Fascism as well as in Nazism, war is regarded as the greatest moral ideal. Mussolini in his article "The Political and Social Doctrine of Fascism" in the Italian *Encyclopaedia* wrote :

"Fascism believes neither in the possibility nor the utility of perpetual peace," since "war alone brings up to its highest tension all human energy and puts the stamp of nobility upon the peoples who have the courage to meet it."

Hitler wrote in the same chauvinistic strain in his *Mein Kampf* :

"Only when the idealistic longing for independence is organised in such a way that it can fight for its ideal with military, only then can the urgent wish of a people be transformed into potent reality. Any *weltanschauung* though a thousand-fold right and supremely beneficial to humanity, will be of no practical service for the maintenance of a people as long as its principles have not yet become the rallying point of a militant movement. And, on its own side, this movement will remain a mere party until it has brought its ideals to victory and transformed its party doctrines into the new foundations of a State which gives the national community its final shape."

It is this militant ideal which has determined the course of the Nazi economic policy. Despite an ambitious programme of labour uplift (given in the foregoing pages), labourers in Germany were continually exhorted to regard "guns better than butter," and what comes to the same thing, regard, themselves as "cannon fodder." Looked at from this angle, Nazism appears as a colossal trick to ravish and entice the workers from their peaceful pursuits and launch them on the war-path. Industry was set to play the role of a handmaid to Mars. This explains why Nazism failed to bring about the oft-promised millennium. This may be verified by the study of the German situation at two periods since the Nazi revolution. The first is afforded by a speech delivered by Dr. Ley, President of the Labour Front early in 1934, quoted by Joad in his *Liberty Today* from *The Times*, April 10, 1934. This clarifies the situation after a year of Nazi rule. To the employers he said :

"The Labour Front must make it clear that although he had a right to profit, he (the employer) had no right at the present time to take any profit whatever out of his business. At a time when the worker was to some extent being paid starvation wages in the interests of the reconstruction of the nation, the utmost sacrifice must also be demanded of the other partner."

To the workers his message was :

"That at the same time the worker must realise that, while the State was finding bread and work for seven million unemployed, he must renounce wage increases and such like things for the time being."

The Italians and Germans sacrificed their freedom and hitched their wagon to the star of a deified dictatorship, but were none the better for their self-immolation. They stewed in their juice without any refuge or redemption. The late Mr. J. A. Spender, wrote in his book *These Times* :

"Whatever test we take, whether wage levels, standard of living, public finance, volume of trade, general well-being, there is nothing in the condition of the countries which have sacrificed their freedom which makes it even plausible to suggest that we should gain by following their examples."

This is an outline of the rival social philosophies which emerged from the economic malaise to rectify the paradox of scarcity amidst plenty. A balance-sheet of their merits and demerits shows that all of them are like the Tower of Pisa always leaning to one side. Of the lot, Communism is more original and frank. In the words of H. G. Wells, Karl Marx delineated accurately the causes of capitalistic decay, but when it came to prescribing a remedy he offered mere incantations. Orthodox Communism, as Lothrop Stoddard points out in his *Clashing Tides of Colour*, is a one-sided attempt to solve our economic and social problems. Although its goal is class-less society, enjoying economic equality, Communism proposes to attain this end by the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, thus exalting the interests of one class and summarily eliminating all other classes, however numerous, by a ruthless process of proscription, amounting to physical extermination. Everything is subordinated to the proletarian ideal. Art, literature, knowledge,

even science are proletarianised. Immemorial institutions like private property and family are incontinently scrapped. Lastly, religion in its traditional sense is to be extirpated and replaced by a new social gospel whereby man worships his collective self. Fascism and Nazism went farther and fared worse. They only offered, "a theatre of action" where the youth applauded the men who had forged their chains. What Hitler accomplished in Germany before World War II, was vividly brought out in the late ex-Kaiser's interview to the correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* in Doorn. He was reported to have said :

"Of our Germany which was a nation of poets, musicians, artists and soldiers he (Hitler) has made a nation of hysterics and hermits engulfed in a mob, and led by a thousand liars or fanatics. He is sincere without doubt, but why should he be human? He is a man alone, without a family. He builds legions, but not a nation."

"Over there," the late ex-Kaiser added, pointing over Holland to the Reich, "an all-swallowing State, disdainful of human dignities and the ancient structure of our race, sets itself up in place of everything else, and the man who alone incorporates in himself this whole State, has neither God to honour nor dynasty to conserve, nor the past to consult. For a few months I was inclined to believe in Nazi-Socialism as a necessary fever, but the wisest and most outstanding Germans who associated with it for a time, have been got rid of, or even killed. Hitler has nothing left but a bunch of shirted gangsters."

This interview though later denied, gave a suc-

cinct and unmistakable picture of Nazi Germany. King Victor Emmanuel of Italy harboured equally bitter feelings against the Italian tyrant for his oppressive regime.

The question that now confronts us is : why did these idiotic ideologies come to enjoy such wide vogue and popularity in the West ? The answer is not far to seek. World War I, shocked the people out of their old-fashioned faiths. The collapse of "horse-and-buggy" liberal Capitalism in the post-war decade completed the ruin of faiths. Having lost their faiths, people lost vision and judgment and purpose and will as well. In short, there was a serious spiritual crisis. This state of dementia may best be illustrated by quoting a French statesman's remark. When asked what direction will French policy take, he replied, "The direction of a dead dog floating downstream." The loss of faith and vision meant a vacuum in the people's souls as little as Nature can bear in the outside world. Thus the trend of their thought also lost all direction and goal. Something must fill it or mankind would go to rack and ruin. The ideas and ideals which rushed in to fill this gaping intellectual void were these sham philosophies, whose fabricators loudly claimed to impart purpose and dignity to human life on earth.

The Communist promise was a promise of "a fowl in every pot" to the disinherited workers, but it was at the same time a serious menace to the middle and upper classes. It was a false promise, but its beneficiaries clung to it tenaciously for want of a better alternative. Hence Moscow became the Mecca

of the world proletariat.

In Italy and Germany, Fascism came to relieve war-torn people of the incubus of disillusion and despair. It was a promise to the disinherited middle classes, but it harassed the workers and the upper classes. Thus it caused a serious social cleavage, but the frustrated middle class staked their all on it.

When all is said and done, one must admit that these social philosophies failed to give the faith that men must have to lean on and live by. Purpose and dignity, vision and imagination continued to be absent from men's lives. "The Great Perhaps" corroded and undermined belief in the higher and nobler destiny. Their failure is due to the fact that while they purveyed hope to one section of humanity, they held out threats of destruction to others. There was more of chauvinism than charity in them. Their contribution to human civilisation consists in a set of cults and kulturs which inculcate beastly qualities in human beings. This is regression, broad and clear. An eminent anthropologist has said that the best criterion of the development of civilisation is to be found in the growth of charity. Charity evidently implies two things, i.e. the toleration of differences of opinion in politics and religion, and compassion for the sufferings or disabilities of other men and eagerness to salvage them. This attitude towards life is the highest expression of advancing civilisation. In the light of the foregoing discussion it is indubitably clear that the different socio-economic doctrines discussed in the foregoing pages cannot foster real and abiding charity.

This shows that human intellect is incapable of evolving an ideal system for socio-economic salvation. Naturally we must turn to religion and seek its help in redeeming mankind from its discords and distresses. Emanating as it does from the All-knowing and All-powerful God, it can well claim to comprehend the complex affairs of human society.

There are three religions worth mentioning. They are Hinduism, Christianity and Islam. Hinduism has prepared the procrustean bed of the caste system on which men lose their human shape. It bans and taboos all attempts at social renovation. The law of the transmigration of soul is the anchor-sheet of Hinduism. According to its implications 'what is, is right' because it is the result of past actions, and no human endeavour can undo it. Consistent with this dogma, it sounds a gross blasphemy to uplift the fallen who according to the Hindu doctrine of *Karma*, are suffering for the sins committed in their past life. As a natural corollary, the capitalist class cannot be regarded but as people placed in their seats of pelf and power as a result of the operation of law of *Karma*. To decry or denounce them or to unseat them by some social revolution would be tantamount to frustrating God's Own Grand Design. Similarly labourers, no matter how woe-begone and soul-searing their condition, merit no sympathy, but scorn as *reprobates* caught in the meshes of their sins and transgressions committed in some immemorial past. Thus all economic or political reforms to change the *status quo* are repugnant to the very spirit of Hinduism. This is why the social laws in the Hindu community do not

provide any basis for the construction of a healthy and progressive society.

Obscurantism inherent in Hindu society has been the *bete noir* of sociologists who are appalled at the unmitigated attachment of the Hindus to the rotten, oppressive and undemocratic structure of caste system. Phillip Spratt views this unprogressive social set-up under the magnifying glass and exposes its basic defect even to an untrained eye. He says, "This concentration of emotion in the old and narrow channels of family and caste, which were doubtless once useful institutions, but have long lost most of their practical functions, may help to account for the lack of social initiative in Hindu society. It has often been remarked how reluctant Hindus in general are to form association for political, economic, intellectual, social, sporting and such like purposes. Doubtless it helps also to account for the poverty of culture in recent times since energy is confined to these sterile, since functionless, forms and their endless quarrels." Hindus are notorious for their Freudian obsession with astrology. Spratt traces it to the depressing effects of inhuman caste system. He says, "It is only in an atmosphere of caste slavery that astrology can retain a firm hold on an intelligent community. Astrology is a theory of human helplessness. It is not merely an intellectual error, it is a social disease." (*Independent India*, 11th August, 1946).

It is now clear as daylight that a caste-ridden society is impervious to healthy reforms. Even its intellectuals gloat over their obscurantism and resent and resist any move or measure which provokes a

breach in the citadel of the ancient society. Progress or evolution is damned as an illusion (*Maya*). These people hug to their bosoms the pattern of institutional relationships, which is in the process of quick dissolution. They want to preserve the antiquated social contours against inevitable dissipation by damming the stream of progress. This type of response to dynamic social changes forms a major strand in the Hindu history. It is the rationalisation of what Freud vaguely described as *death instinct* or of what Eric Fromm has more aptly called the *fear of freedom* and Karan Horney has characterised as *insecurity psychosis*.

There can be no genuine freedom in a society which attaches more value to abstention from life than to the acceptance of it, which in consequence scorns the world and extols world-worthlessness. Freedom, as a sociological concept, signifies a sustained and severe struggle against the anarchy and adversity of circumstances; its purpose is to mould and harness social conditions to the service of the individual. To the people rendered timid by the galling yoke and the blinding blinkers of the caste system, the logic of this crusade against adverse circumstantial pressure leads to the formula—'No freedom, no pain'. We find evidence of this timid evasion of unpleasant realities not only in the Vedantist concept of *Moksha*, but also in the Buddhist ideal of *Nirvana* and "the ethical sensations of the empiricists, the Schopenhauerian negation of the will to survive, in Bergson's concept of *elan* and the Spenglerian visualisation of Dead End. One detects its working in the Pascalian conception of Original

Sin and estrangement of man from Godhead, in the aesthetics of surrealism, in the political ideal of surrender of individual liberty to the Absolute State."

Manu's Laws which constitute the keystone of the arch of Hinduism, betray a strong bias towards Capitalism by a partial condonation of the institution of interest. They forbid the division of the ancestral property and enjoin the joint family system. This leads to the concentration and accumulation of capital. Thus Capitalism grows and develops under the protecting wings of the Vedic religion.

Much against its original intentions and designs, Christianity has attained world-wide dimensions and has been responsible for creating mass-consciousness. H.G. Wells writes: "It is the writer's belief that massive movements of the 'ordinary people' over considerable areas only became possible as a result of the propagandist religions, Christianity and Islam, and their insistence upon individual self-respect"—(The Outline of History, p. 968). But a minute study of the Gospels will reveal that Christianity is essentially a religion of withdrawal from life because it sedulously seeks to cultivate life-denying attitudes. "Whosoever he be of you that renounceth not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." This is Jesus's commandment. Christian self-respect meant renunciation of world and all it meant, and retirement as a recluse. Christ's teachings lay great stress on love and peace. He disparaged and deprecated riches and exalted poverty. His intention in doing so, was to banish professionalism and commercialism

which had vitiated the seat of worship at Jerusalem. The action, imputed to Jesus, of expelling the money-changers from the precincts of the temple trenchantly emphasises his strong hatred of Mammonism. To despise riches, to take no thought of the morrow, to give up all to the poor, such precepts inculcate a ruinously negative attitude towards life. It is in recognition of this fact that Shailer Matthew writes in his *Jesus and Social Institution* : "It is far wiser to recognise frankly the fact that just as Jesus's teaching is non-political, so it is in any strict sense non-economic." Owing to the lack of any positive and constructive laws, Christianity failed of its elementary aim of elevating the poor. In course of time the Church came timidly to acquiesce in major inequalities, injustices and oppressions of the prevailing economic system. The Catholic *Encyclopaedia* expresses itself on the subject thus :

"Christian teachers, following the example of St. Paul, implicitly accept slavery as not in itself incompatible with the Christian Law. The Apostle counsels slaves to obey their masters and to bear with their conditions patiently. This estimate of slavery continued to prevail until it became fixed in the systematised ethical teachings of the schools; and so it remained without any conspicuous alteration until the end of the eighteenth century."

Indeed, a moral justification for slavery was provided by St. Augustine, who held that "it was one of the penalties incurred by man as a result of the sin of Adam and Eve." Nay, one learns from St.

Chrysostom that "slavery was declared to be a blessing because, like poverty, it afforded the opportunity of practising the virtues of humanity and patience."

In the light of these observations, only a lunatic can expect Christianity to lead mankind to the Land of Promise by bringing politics and economics under its diocese. Its inherent incapacity to accomplish this job is exposed in the pungent remarks of Marx and Engels who say :

"The social principles of Christianity had eighteen hundred years in which to develop and they need no further development at the hands of the priests and missionaries. The social principles of Christianity justified slavery in the classic world and they glorified mediaeval serfdom and, if necessary, they are quite willing to defend the oppression of the proletariat even if they should wear a crest-fallen appearance the while. The social principles of Christianity preach the necessity of a ruling and an oppressive class, and all they have to offer to the latter is the pious wish that the former may be charitable. The social principles of Christianity transfer the reparation of all infamies to the realms of heaven and then they justify the perpetuation of the infamies on the earth. The social principles of Christianity declare that all the villainies of the oppressors against the oppressed are either the just punishment for original or other sin, or tribulations which God in His own inscrutable wisdom causes the Elect to suffer. The social principles of Christianity preach cowardice, self-abasement, resignation, submission and

humility, in short all the characteristics of the *canaille*; but the proletariat is not prepared to let itself to be treated as *canaille*, and it needs its courage, confidence, pride and independence even more than it needs its daily bread. The social principles of Christianity are sneaking and hypothetical while the proletariat is revolutionary."

The above is an impressive account of the social insufficiencies of Christianity. The fact that it comes from a hostile pen does not obscure the truth. Even some great Christian writers have subscribed to this view. In his book *Christian Ethics and Modern Problems*, Dean Inge aptly remarks, "The standard in the Gospels is heroic and perfectionist; it is not, as we cannot remind ourselves too often, a code of permissible conduct for a large community." Randal in *Religion and Modern World* writes:

"Jesus was beyond question a truly great moral genius. Into many of the older teachings which he registered he put new meanings; to more than one profound moral problem he brought the illumination of new insight. More guidance, in fact, can be found in his treatment of specific moral difficulties than in the general principles of conduct which pass as the summation of his ethics. To love your neighbour as yourself and to do unto all men as you would they should unto you are after all rather profoundly moving incentives to search one's own heart. To suggest that the intricate and complicated problems of modern society can be solved by these abstract principles and by them alone is to urge that the books

of Euclid are a sufficient manual for the building of bridges and sky-scrapers."

It would be labouring the obvious to emphasise the failures of the Church to come to grips with the burning socio-economic questions. The Church has always chosen to throw in its lot with the big battalions. In the past it sought alliance with monarchs and despots. In the twentieth century, it wooed capitalists and toed the line for the Dictators. While the Lutheran Church in Germany played second fiddle to Hitler and his henchmen, the 'Holy' Pope in Rome had been in an unholy alliance with the Duce and demurely drawing his chestnuts from fire. Even after the tyrant's inglorious end, the 'august inmate' of the Vatican gave no promise of leading light to the benighted and uprooted continent.

We now turn to Islam. In the religion of the Holy Prophet (be peace on him), idealism and realism come to terms. Secularity and spirituality, instead of clashing with each other and culminating in atheism or asceticism, blend into a harmonious whole. Metaphorically speaking, its teachings symbolise the confluence of earth and heaven. Religious devotions have a vital bearing on man's activities in the mundane sphere of his life. They impart a strong spiritual glow to his pursuits and exorcise the demon of selfishness from his day-to-day activities. The Golden Calf is knocked off its pedestal and the love of mankind is enshrined in the hearts with a practical and practicable code to express it in the social life. In the words of Goethe there is "neither hammer nor

anvil." People living under the ægis of the Quranic teachings and realising them in their worldly pursuits are not smitten with envy, greed and avarice. A wealthy man is not in jeopardy because of his riches nor a worker in disgrace because of his avocation. He can say with the shepherd Corin in *As You Like It*: "Sir, I am a true labourer, I earn that I eat, get that I wear, owe no man hate, envy no man's happiness."

Sir Theodore Morrison in his article "England and Islam" in the *Nineteenth Century and After* of July, 1919, wrote: "In truth, Islam is more than a creed, it is a complete social system; it is a civilisation with a philosophy, a culture and an art of its own, in its long struggle against rival civilisation of Christendom it has become an organic unit conscious of itself."

"No Muhammadan believes that Islamic civilisation is dead or incapable of further development. They recognise that it has fallen on evil days; that it has suffered from an excessive veneration of the past, from prejudice and bigotry and narrow scholasticism not unlike that which obscured European thought in the Middle Ages, but they believe that Islam too is about to have its Renaissance, that it is receiving from Western learning a stimulus which will quicken it into fresh activity, and that the evidences of this new life are everywhere manifest."

A more convincing testimony of the vital and vitalising force of Islam is forthcoming from a well-known American scholar—Lothrop Stoddard, who in his *Clashing Tides of Colour*, writes:

"Broadly speaking, the Near East possesses a fundamental unity—that of Islam. The native Christian and Jewish minorities are local survivals from the long past times. Now Islam is more than a creed; it is a culture and a way of life. However radically it may be modified by Westernism, Islam will remain the basis upon which new development will repose. Also Islam is not ossified or decadent as many Westerners assume. It is very much alive and it has long been in genuine evolution. The Islamic world touched its lowest depth or decrepitude two centuries ago. Thereafter began the movement known as the Muhammadan Revival—a spiritual leaven which has never ceased to work and which continues to work and which continues to produce important effects."

"This revival, be it noted, was not due to Western impacts: it sprang from Islam's own vitality. Here, then, we have a new factor, not present elsewhere in the contacts of East and West. This further marks the difference between the current transformation of the Near East and that of other oriental religions."

The rapid spread of Islam is, to a great extent, due to its sublime practicality and its promise of balanced life to its followers. Havell who is a great admirer of Hindu culture and has no soft corner for Islam had perforce to pay a glowing tribute to the socio-economic programme of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him). In his book, *Aryan Rule in India*, he writes, "It was not philosophy of Islam, but its sociological programme

which won so many converts for it in India. . . .” The social programme of the Prophet . . . gave every true believer an equal spiritual status . . . made Islam a political and social synthesis and gave it an imperial mission. . . . Islam was a rule of life sufficient for the happiness of average humanity, content to take the world as it is.” Gibbon also testifies to the fact that the phenomenal success of Islam was due to the uniqueness of its spiritual as well as socio-political programme. He says, “More pure than the system of Zoroaster, more liberal than the Laws of Moses, the religion of Muhammad might seem less inconsistent with reason than the creed of mystery and superstition which in the seventh century disgraced the simplicity of the Gospel.” (*Decline and Fall of Roman Empire*)

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Some popular Terms have, in course of time, acquired such new meanings as have superseded and suppressed their original academic significance. They are given below as food for thought.

Capital—(1) That which provides the fire, the pot, the dinner, the table and the knife and knife for the anarchist.

(2) A term to describe the money the other fellow has, in contrast with the term *labour* which is getting it away from him.

Capitalism—An economic System that capitalizes on capital.

Capitalist—Any man who gathers a fortune he does not need to leave to people who don't deserve it. A man who believes in low wages so that he can earn enough to support charities for needy workers.

Charity—(1) The condensed milk of human kindness.

(2) Giving away what you cannot use.

(3) An amiable quality of the heart which moves the rich to condone in others the sins and vices to which the rich are addicted.

Democracy—(1) It is a form of government which dispenses equality to equals and unequals as well.

Islam Versus Socialism

- (2) It is often an autocracy of a demo.
- (3) A form of government where liberty is preserved not canned.
- (4) A wise fatherland that knows its own children.
- (5) Where you can say what you please but don't have to listen unless you want to.
- (6) A government of court decisions, by court decisions, for court decisions.
- (7) A form of government that is run by all the people and run down by some.
- (8) A form of government in which there is no particular individual to blame for the existing tyranny.
- (9) A system under which a man who doesn't vote spends his time criticising the candidates other men have elected.
- (10) It is a form of stabilized liquidation of the people, by the people, for the people.
- (11) That form of government in which, if the Democrats (U.S.) wins the Republican leaders go to San Quentus, and if the Republicans win, the Democratic leaders unite with the masses in Alaska mines.
- (12) The principle that all men are endowed with inalienable rights, all of which they must fight for.

Democrat—A person who looks up to no body, looks down on no body, but looks straight into the eyes of everybody.

Dictatorship—A system of government where everything that is not forbidden is obligatory.

Dictator—(1) A man who can't keep people in hand without using a clenched fist.

(2) A man who thinks he can take it no matter to whom it belongs.

(3) A person who has an easy mind reaching a misunderstanding with other countries.

(4) The chief of a nation that prefers the pestilence of despotism to the plague of anarchy.

(5) One who expects others to say "yes" and "Amen".

Dictator's

Mathematics—Whatever is added is lost, whatever you subtract is never missed.

Dictatorship of the

Proletariat—One in which the proletariat is really dictated to, and moreover likes it.

Dialectics—(1) A doctrine that there is no fool like an old fool because he has had more practice.

(2) A method of reasoning or evolution, or any conclusion thereof, which you know "ain't so".

Communism—(1) Something dictated and red.

(2) A form of government where you can say what you please as long as you please—the Dictator.

(3) A form of government that would be less undesirable if it weren't for the Communists.

Communist—(1) A good Marxman.

(2) A Socialist in a hurry.

(3) A man who has no hope of becoming a Capitalist.

(4) A man who thinks a government is as bad as the party out of office says it is.

(5) A fellow who borrows your pot to cook your goose in.

(6) A party which fisticuffs you into submission to its ideals and ideology.

(7) One who hath yearnings for equal division of unequal earnings.

(8) Who stands for wages without work and wealth without savings.

Proletariat—That wage-earning class of workers dependent on jobs, the more genuine the more dependent they are, considered the most revolutionary class of Society. A class of people whose sole contribution to the state is to produce offspring as workers and soldiers.

Labour—(1) It is always within the striking distance of Capital.

(2) One of the processes by which A acquires property for B.

Labourer—One who, when it comes to wages is worthy of his higher.

Labour Union—An association of workers who believe that wage reduction is a Capital offence.

Labour Government—An organised strike of democracy.

Socialism—(1) A system which believes Capitalist punishment to be Capital.

(2) Capitalism with a different pair of pants.

(3) The advocacy of government control of public utilities to do away with the government control by public utilities.

(4) Rheumatism of the poor which demands blankets from the rich.

Socialist—(1) An individual who is not an individualist.

(2) A person who believes a profit is not without honour unless it is small.

(3) Who believes in cradle-to-grave insurance.

Socialist State—The political entity which withers away silently and naturally through the growth of the secret police and a dependent judiciary.

Elections—A race with one horse (Attlee).

Karl Marx—A man who made very little capital by writing his lot about Capital.

Marxian Materialism—An optical arrangement of many mirrors, by means of which you can always see what you want to see.

Socialist Economy—Concentrated politics (Djilas).

Social Democratism—A belief that all stomachs are the same.

Bourgeois (in Russia)—In ethics and society: holding belief in God and religion, belief in freedom.

THE END

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